

YOU AND I

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HARRIET MONROE



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Book \_\_\_\_\_

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YOU AND I



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# YOU AND I

BY

HARRIET MONROE  
||

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1914

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To

MARGARET ROOT FECHHEIMER

*Dear Margaret: A book of poems should have almost as many dedications as titles, for the poet must always sing for some friend, whether the friend knows it or not. Therefore certain of these poems are frankly inscribed to the people whose high hearts inspired or received them; and certain others, even though uninscribed, will be claimed, no doubt, by those to whom they belong. If, in gathering them all together, I offer the book to you, it is in the hope of invoking for it your spirit of youth and joy.*

*To win that would be what mortals mean by immortality. May you live forever!*

H. M.



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## I. TOWN AND TRAVEL



## THE HOTEL

THE long resounding marble corridors, the shining parlors with shining women in them.

The French room, with its gilt and garlands under plump little tumbling painted loves.

The Turkish room, with its jumble of many carpets and its stiffly squared un-Turkish chairs.

The English room, all heavy crimson and gold, with spreading palms lifted high in round green tubs.

The electric lights in twos and threes and hundreds, made into festoons and spirals and arabesques, a maze and magic of bright persistent radiance.

The people sitting in corners by twos and threes, and cooing together under the glare.

The long rows of silent people in chairs, watching with eyes that see not while the patient band tangles the air with music.

The bell-boys marching in with cards, and shouting names over and over into ears that do not heed.

The stout and gorgeous dowagers in lacy white and lilac, bedizened with many jewels, with smart little scarlet or azure hats on their gray-streaked hair.

The business men in trim and spotless suits, who walk in and out with eager steps, or sit at the desks and tables, or watch the shining women.

The telephone girls forever listening to far voices, with the silver band over their hair and the little black caps obliterating their ears.

The telegraph tickers sounding their perpetual *chit—chit-chit* from the uttermost ends of the earth.

The waiters, in black swallow-tails and white aprons, passing here and there with trays of bottles and glasses.



The quiet and sumptuous bar-room, with purplish men softly drinking in little alcoves, while the bar-keeper, mixing bright liquors, is rapidly plying his bottles.

The great bedecked and gilded café, with its glitter of a thousand mirrors, with its little white tables bearing gluttonous dishes whereto bright forks, held by pampered hands, flicker daintily back and forth.

The white-tiled, immaculate kitchen, with many little round blue fires, where white-clad cooks are making spiced and flavored dishes.

The cool cellars filled with meats and fruits, or layered with sealed and bottled wines mellowing softly in the darkness.

The invisible stories of furnaces and machines, burrowing deep down into the earth, where grimy workmen are heavily laboring.

The many-windowed stories of little homes and shelters and sleeping-places, reaching up into the night like some miraculous, high-piled honeycomb of wax-white cells.

The clothes inside of the cells—the stuffs, the

silks, the laces; the elaborate delicate disguises that wait in trunks and drawers and closets, or bedrape and conceal human flesh.

The people inside of the clothes, the bodies white and young, bodies fat and bulging, bodies wrinkled and wan, all alike veiled by fine fabrics, sheltered by walls and roofs, shut in from the sun and stars.

The souls inside of the bodies—the naked souls; souls weazened and weak, or proud and brave; all imprisoned in flesh, wrapped in woven stuffs, enclosed in thick and painted masonry, shut away with many shadows from the shining truth.

God inside of the souls, God veiled and wrapped and imprisoned and shadowed in fold on fold of flesh and fabrics and mockeries; but ever alive, struggling and rising again, seeking the light, freeing the world.

## NIGHT IN STATE STREET

*Art thou he?—*

*The seer and sage, the hero and lover—yea,  
The man of men, then away from the haughty  
day*

*Come with me!*

Ho—ho! to the night—

The spangled night that would the noon out-  
stare.

Her skirts are fringed with light,  
She is girdled and crowned with gems of fire  
that flare.

The city is dizzy with the thrill of her—  
Her shining eyes and shadowy floating hair;  
And curious winds her nebulous garments blur,  
Blowing her moon-white limbs and bosom bare.

She beckons me—

Down the deep street she goes to keep her tryst.

Come—come—oh follow! oh see  
The many-windowed walls uprear so high  
They dim and quiver and float away in mist  
Tangling the earth and sky.  
And the pale stars go by  
Like spirits masterful and still and strong,  
Dragging the heavy nets of life along.

Down in the deep  
Lightly the nets enmesh us with the swarm  
Of huddled human things that, soft and warm,  
Beat out so close the pulses of their lives.  
We crowd and creep,  
We jostle and push out of our halls and hives,  
We chatter and laugh and weep.  
Ah, do you hear  
The choral of voices, each the secret hiding?  
Do you see the warren of souls, each one abiding  
In separate solitude, remote, austere?

Here in the glare of the street we cling together  
Against the warning darkness, the still height  
Of the awful night.

We blow like a feather  
From hope to hope along the winds of fate  
Importunate.

The lettered lights that twinkle in and out  
Lure us and laugh at us, beckon and flout,  
Flashing their slangy symbols in our eyes,  
Blurting their gaudy lies.

The bold shop-windows flaunt their empty  
wares—

Jewelled or tinselled shows of things,  
The fripperies and furnishings  
Wherein stark life will stifle her shiverings  
Ere forth in the dawn she fares.

Ah, tyranny perilous!  
Vain shows that master us!  
See the gay girls fluttering wistfully,  
Where waxen dummies grin in gowns of lace.  
Watch yonder woman in black, whose dimmed  
eyes see  
Soft baby things folded with tender grace.  
And look at the children crowding and shout-  
ing there  
Where dancing dolls jiggle and jerk and stare.

They hover and cling  
Possessed by signs and shadows of the thing.  
They moor their bark  
Close to the shore and fathom not the dark—  
The dark that glooms afar  
Beyond the invisible star,  
Beyond faith's boundaries,  
The plausible was and is.

Come, ye adventurous,  
Open your hearts to us!  
You tiny newsboy, calling extras there,  
Pitiful burden-bearer, pale with blight,  
What of the night?—  
The sullen night that brings you, little one,  
So heavy a load of care,  
While happier children sleep from sun to sun?  
And you, wan youth, haggard and spent,  
By mad thirst driven and rent—  
Thirst of the body, thirst of the soul—  
To what dark goal  
Does reeling night lead you, her listless prey,  
To gorge you and slay,  
And hide forever from the searching day?

And you, furtive and flaunting girl,  
Whose heavy-lidded eyes unfurl  
Red signal fires, the while, demure,  
Your brooding lips deny their lure—  
Ah, does the lewd night lash you to her cave,  
And will you never her ribald rage out-brave,  
And rise no more forlorn  
To greet the morn?

The street grows insolent.  
With cries of dark delight  
And gestures impudent  
It rends the robe of night.  
Up to the silent sky  
It shouts the human cry.

The crowds push in and out  
By all the open ways,  
Eager to stare and shout  
At vaudeville waifs of plays.  
They drop their coins and laugh  
At the wheezy phonograph,  
They hush for the noisy drone  
Of the croaking megaphone.  
At every flippant show



That litters life with jest  
They pause that they may not go  
On life's eternal quest.  
They stifle truth with speech,  
They mimic love with lust,  
For the glitter of guilt they reach  
And cover the gold with dust.  
They stoop to the din and glare  
Who have the lofty night for comrade rare.  
They grope along the ground  
Whose stature like the night with stars is  
crowned.

Oh piteous!  
Oh struggle vain!  
Of puppets emulous,  
We strive and strain  
To forge for our limbs a chain.  
Come, thou deep-hearted Night, so dark and  
bright!  
Come, holy Night, come, lawless, dissolute  
Night!  
Come, human Night, hushing thy dreams di-  
vine!



Give me thy dreams, O Night—they shall be  
mine!—

Mine and this beggar's, though we lie to thee!  
Mine and this harlot's, though from thee we  
flee!

Mine and this worldling's, though with might  
and right

We hide them from our sight.

Thy shadowed eyes the truth behold, and we—  
We too shall know the truth, and so be free!

Even now—yea, now

Through lies and vanities we pry and peer.

Even now we bow

At little shrines where pale fires flicker and  
flee.

Hark! in the echoing street

The drums that bang and beat,

Where the curb-stone preachers tell

The way to heaven and hell.

Look! in yon window there

A man through a glass astare

At atoms and embryos,

The source whence all life flows.

So you and I, O friend,

Search the beginning and end.  
We may not choose but follow—  
Yes, you and I and these—  
The fume of the noisome hollow,  
The gleam of the Pleiades.  
Wherever one goes in quest  
With his quest we are cursed or blest.  
And the street, with its blazing mockery of  
noon,  
Leads on to the quiet stars, to the lofty moon.

The little lights go out now row on row,  
The dim crowds glide away. The shadowed  
street  
Pillars the vaulted sky. And Night, proud  
Night,  
Rapt in her dreams, with stately tread and slow  
Patrols the drowsy world. O friend complete,  
How may we read her deep delight aright?

*Art thou he—  
The seer and sage, the hero and lover—yea,  
The man of men, then even to the gates of day  
Lead thou me!*

## THE TURBINE

*To W. S. M.*

LOOK at her—there she sits upon her throne  
As ladylike and quiet as a nun!  
But if you cross her—whew! her thunderbolts  
Will shake the earth! She's proud as any  
    queen,  
The beauty—knows her royal business too,  
To light the world, and does it night by night  
When her gay lord, the sun, gives up his job.  
I am her slave; I wake and watch and run  
From dark till dawn beside her. All the while  
She hums there softly, purring with delight  
Because men bring the riches of the earth  
To feed her hungry fires. I do her will  
And dare not disobey, for her right hand  
Is power, her left is terror, and her anger  
Is havoc. Look—if I but lay a wire

Across the terminals of yonder switch  
She'll burst her windings, rip her casings off,  
And shriek till envious Hell shoots up its flames,  
Shattering her very throne. And all her people,  
The laboring, trampling, dreaming crowds out  
there—  
Fools and the wise who look to her for light—  
Will walk in darkness through the liquid night,  
Submerged.

Sometimes I wonder why she stoops  
To be my friend—oh yes, who talks to me  
And sings away my loneliness; my friend,  
Though I am trivial and she sublime.  
Hard-hearted?—No, tender and pitiful,  
As all the great are. Every arrogant grief  
She comforts quietly, and all my joys  
Dance to her measures through the tolerant  
night.  
She talks to me, tells me her troubles too,  
Just as I tell her mine. Perhaps she feels  
An ache deep down—that agonizing stab  
Of grit grating her bearings; then her voice  
Changes its tune, it wails and calls to me

To soothe her anguish, and I run, her slave,  
Probe like a surgeon and relieve the pain.

We have our jokes too, little mockeries  
That no one else in all the swarming world  
Would see the point of. She will laugh at me  
To show her power: maybe her carbon packings  
Leak steam, and I run madly back and forth  
To keep the infernal fiends from breaking  
loose:

Suddenly she will throttle them herself  
And chuckle softly, far above me there,  
At my alarms.

But there are moments—hush!—  
When my turn comes; her slave can be her  
master,  
Conquering her he serves. For she's a woman,  
Gets bored there on her throne, tired of her-  
self,  
Tingles with power that turns to wantonness.  
Suddenly something's wrong—she laughs at me,  
Bedevils the frail wires with some mad caress  
That thrills blind space, calls down ten thousand  
lightnings

To ruin her pomp and set her spirit free.  
Then with this puny hand, swift as her threat,  
Must I beat back the chaos, hold in leash  
Destructive furies, rescue her—even her—  
From the fierce rashness of her truant mood,  
And make me lord of far and near a moment,  
Startling the mystery. Last night I did it—  
Alone here with my hand upon her heart  
I faced the mounting fiends and whipped them  
down;  
And never a wink from the long file of lamps  
Betrayed her to the world.

So there she sits,  
Mounted on all the ages, at the peak  
Of time. The first man dreamed of light, and  
dug  
The sodden ignorance away, and cursed  
The darkness; young primeval races dragged  
Foundation stones, and piled into the void  
Rage and desire; the Greek mounted and sang  
Promethean songs and lit a signal fire;  
The Roman bent his iron will to forge  
Deep furnaces; slow epochs riveted

With hope the secret chambers: till at last  
We, you and I, this living age of ours,  
A new-winged Mercury, out of the skies  
Filch the wild spirit of light, and chain him  
there  
To do her will forever.

Look, my friend,  
Behold a sign! What is this crystal sphere—  
This little bulb of glass I lightly lift,  
This iridescent bubble a child might blow  
Out of its brazen pipe to hold the sun—  
What strange toy is it? In my hand it lies  
Cold and inert, its puny artery—  
That curling cobweb film—ashen and dead.  
But see—a twist or two—let it but touch  
The hem, far trailing, of my lady's robe,  
And lo, the burning life-blood of the stars  
Leaps to its heart, that glows against the dark,  
Kindling the world.

Even so I touch her garment,  
Her servant through the quiet night; and thus  
I lay my hand upon the Pleiades



And feel their throb of fire. Grandly she gives  
To me unworthy; woman inscrutable,  
Scatters her splendors through my darkness,  
    leads me

Far out into the workshop of the worlds.  
There I can feel those infinite energies  
Our little earth just gnaws at through the ether,  
And see the light our sunshine hides. Out there  
Close to the heart of life I am at peace.



## THE OCEAN LINER

THEY went down to the sea in ships,  
In ships they went down to the sea.  
In boats hewn of oak-tree strips,  
In galleys with skin-sewn sails,  
In triremes, caravels, brigs—  
Frail, flimsily rolling rigs—  
They went down where the huge wave rips,  
Where the black storm lashes and hales.  
They went down to the sea in ships,  
To the sounding, sorrowing sea.

They go down to the sea—O me!—  
What ships that outbrave the sea,  
What ships that outrun the gale,  
With a feather of steam for a sail  
And a whirling shaft for an oar,  
Are the ships that my brothers build  
To carry me over the sea,

That my hand with treasures filled  
May knock at the morrow's door!

Steel hulls impenetrable  
To the waves that tease and pull,  
Bright engines that answer the beat  
Of their foam-slippered dancing feet,  
Hot fires that shudder and drive,  
Close-tended, untiring, sure—  
Like queen-bees deep in the hive  
Who labor and serve and endure:  
All these are down below  
Far under the slippery water,  
While the babe sleeps soft in his bed,  
And the banquet table is spread,  
And my neighbor's laughing daughter  
Trims her hair with a rose-red bow.

They went down to the sea in ships,  
In ships they went down to the sea.  
And the sea had a million lips  
And she laughed in her throat for glee.  
And the floor of the sea was strewn  
With tempest trophies dread,

And the deep-sea currents croon  
As they wash through the bones of the dead.  
But the ships that my brothers build—  
Ah, they mock at the storm's mad rage;  
And their burning hearts are thrilled  
When he throws them his battle gauge.  
On the sea-foam they lean for a pillow,  
They drive without paddle or sail  
Straight over the mountainous billow,  
Straight on through the blustering gale!  
Oh they shake out gay flags as they run,  
Flags that flutter and gleam in the sun!  
From the tip of their turrets above  
They send news of the storm to the shore;  
And they hear from afar through the roar,  
Down the cloud-built aisles of the sky,  
Some land-bound lady's cry  
To her ocean-wandering love.

They go down to the sea in ships,  
In ships they go down to the sea.  
And my brothers, the masterful, free,  
Fear no more the white foam of her lips,  
The sweet wild kiss of the sea!

They have won her, she harks to their wooing,  
The love of ten thousand years,  
The suing, the wild undoing,  
The faith unto death, the tears.  
Oh, their glory her song shall be;  
Soft, soft is the kiss of her lips!  
They go down to the sea in ships,  
In ships they go down to the sea.

## OUR CANAL

*To Colonel Goethals and the Other Laborers  
in the Canal Zone*

*In lazy laughing Panama—  
O flutter of ribbon 'twixt the seas!—  
The low-roofed houses lie afloat,  
White foam-drift of the Caribbees.  
Under lithe palms that fan the sky  
Down in each drowsy plaza there,  
Brown-footed girls go glancing by  
With red hibiscus in their hair.  
Low mountains, trailing veils of cloud,  
In the two oceans dip their feet,  
And hear the proud tides roaring loud  
Where Andes with Sierras meet.  
O Panama! O ribbon-twist  
That ties the continents together,  
Now East and West shall slip your tether  
And keep their ancient tryst.*

What are you doing here,  
Young men, with your engines vast?  
Sons of the pioneer  
Who conquered wastes austere  
And from ocean to ocean passed;  
Sons of the men who made  
Reaper and telegraph,  
Steamer and aeroplane—  
All the iron-handed things,  
Swift feet and tongues and wings,  
That would make the old gods laugh  
For the bitter games they played  
With the secrets they kept in vain:  
What are you doing here,  
Young men, with your dredges and drills  
That level the ancient hills  
Into a path for ships?  
Open your eyes and lips—  
What do you see and hear?

“Oh, we build you the world’s last wonder,  
The thing not made with hands.  
Our steel beasts gnaw asunder  
The locked and laboring lands.

We choke the torrent's rage,  
And bid him his wrath assuage  
By drowning the jungle deep.  
In steel-locked chambers gray  
We hold his floods at bay,  
On wide blue lakes asleep.  
Now shall the brave ships ride  
Over the crouching hill  
From eager tide to tide,  
That so we may fulfil  
The iron century's will;  
That so our country, maker of tools sublime,  
The nations may surprise  
With this last gift of the grand old workman,  
Time;  
His prodigy powerful, delicate, sentient, wise,  
Perfect in strange completeness, strong to obey,  
Strong to compel the world along its way  
And praise man's triumph in its mighty rhyme."

But what are you doing here,  
Young men, with your flags?—  
With your glamour of joy severe  
In the labor that never lags?

With your villages up the hill,  
The screened little houses gay,  
Where the good of all is the will  
Of each in a grand new way?  
Sons of the men who founded  
New states in the wilds, to be  
Garden and range unbounded  
For young Democracy;  
Sons of the heroes dear  
Who fought for liberty,  
What are you doing here?

“Look, it’s the same old fight  
Out of the dark to the light;  
Never the end shall be  
Till the last slave is free!  
Here while we dig the Ditch  
We would build you a perfect state,  
Where service makes men great  
And the great scorn to be rich;  
Where each man has his place  
And a measure more than his need—  
A banner of joy to grace  
The strength of the daily deed;



Where Disease, trapped in his lair  
With Squalor and Want and Care,  
Is slain with the poison fume  
He loosed for the proud world's doom;  
Where the Work is a marching song  
Sung by us all together,  
Bearing the race along  
Through good and evil weather.  
Oh tell them, shout it through the halls of  
time!—  
When the Big Chief unrolls his glorious plan,  
Draws hearts and hands together in perfect  
rhyme,  
Nothing shall be impossible to Man!"

But what are you doing here,  
Young men, with your gates?  
With your bells and beacons clear  
Where the hope of the whole world waits?  
With your call across the seas  
To the ships that circle afar,  
To the nations that burn and freeze  
Each under her separate star?  
Sons of the dreamers brave

Who followed the Truth austere,  
Of poets and prophets grave—  
What are you doing here?

“Hush! we wait at the gate  
Till the dream shall be the law.  
He gave us our beacons and bells  
Who first the vision saw,  
And the fleets of the world in state  
Shall follow his caravels.  
Ghost-led, our ships shall sail  
West to the ancient East.  
Once more the quest of the Grail,  
And the greatest shall be the least.  
We shall circle the earth around  
With peace like a garland fine;  
The warring world shall be bound  
With a girdle of love divine.  
What build we from coast to coast?  
It's a path for the Holy Ghost.  
Oh Tomorrow and Yesterday  
At its gate clasp hands, touch lips;  
They shall send men forth in ships  
To find the perfect way.

"All that was writ shall be fulfilled at last.  
Come—till we round the circle, end the story.  
The west-bound sun leads forward to the past  
The thundering cruisers and the caravels.  
Tomorrow you shall hear our song of glory  
Rung in the chime of India's temple bells."

*O lazy laughing Panama!  
O flutter of ribbon 'twixt the seas!  
Pirate and king your colors wore  
And stained with blood your golden keys.  
Now what strange guest, on what mad quest,  
Lifts up your trophy to the breeze!  
O Panama, O ribbon-twist  
That ties the continents together,  
Now East and West shall slip your tether  
And keep their ancient tryst.*

## FOR PEACE

FLOWERS grow in the grass,  
Baby footfalls pass  
Over the fields once red,  
Over the hero's head—

For Peace.

The earth, through her leafy veil,  
Whispers a magic tale;  
And the scholar reads in the clod  
The latest news of God—

For Peace.

Brave little wires are spun  
For voices to fly upon;  
Words out of clouds are caught  
From some witch's woof of thought—

For Peace.

And the cataract's foamy troubles  
Illumine a million bubbles,  
In some city far away  
Turning the night to day—  
For Peace.

Proud trains, heralds austere,  
Bring far-off nations near,  
Piercing the mountain's crown,  
Treading the barriers down—  
For Peace.

Swift ships, that pound the sea,  
Set the earth-chained spirit free,  
Show the whole round world unrolled  
Before the young moon grows old—  
For Peace.

And the white-winged aeroplane  
Laughs, in its mad disdain,  
At limits and barricades  
And cruisers and cavalcades—  
For Peace.

Even the war engines dread—  
The guns with bomb-shells fed,  
The grim gray battle-ships—  
Shout through their iron lips  
For Peace.

Oh, never a hero's grave  
But for Peace his life he gave!  
And the warrior bears his scar,  
And the poet sings of war  
For Peace.

## TO IDLENESS

SWEET Idleness, you linger at the door  
To lead me down through meadows cool with  
    shade—  
Down to the brook, over whose pebbly floor  
The fishes, unafraid,  
Swim softly, careless of our airy world.  
I hear you ever singing, calling ever,  
Bidding me sever  
The chain so close about my spirit curled.  
Why do I toil and pore  
When you are at the door?  
Surely Time's slave am I, and you will shun me;  
Surely the delvers of the dark have won me  
If here I stay when you are fled away.

O Idleness, where sleep your votaries?  
In what enchanted garden of pure bliss  
Float their dim dreams on lotus-laden wings?

What joy of musical imaginings  
Lulls them in banishment?  
Ah, call them back to earth, that weary is!  
Ah, call them back, with sleepy-eyed Content  
Close in their flowery train,  
And bid them soothe a world whose joys are  
    spent,  
Who prays for peace in vain!  
Tell them to twine their wreaths round yonder  
    brow,  
Whence lovely hopes flamed skyward once,  
    where now  
Greed showers his ashes gray.  
Bedew those eyes until they shine once more;  
For exiled youth unbar the rusted door,  
And save a soul to-day.

Oh, will you linger with the butterflies,  
And man's high love despise?  
I know one fit for your sweet wooing—  
Ah, save him from the beckoning death!  
Too swiftly Beauty's quest pursuing,  
Soon must he fall, and fail of breath.  
The dull world speeds him on—oh, haste!



With roses bind him, bear him far,  
Sing him sweet songs, weave visions chaste,  
Till he is strong to seek his star!

Ah, we have sinned and grievous is our  
shame!

You we have banished, and reviled your name,  
Till men dig deep in shadows, rubbing o'er  
Their earthy store;

And maids pink-petalled like the morn,  
For you and love and dalliance born,  
Toil clamorous in the dark, and smile no more.

Do you hear the noise? Ah, no! for you are  
flown.

Now you will follow

The flight of song through fields with daisies  
sown.

The sport of thrush and swallow

Rhymes with your joy, and I must brood alone.

## TWO CAPITALS—1910

### MOSCOW

*White Moscow of the pearly towers,  
And golden domes for praise,  
And chiming hours!  
Red Moscow of the Kremlin walls,  
And bloody battle ways,  
And fire-scarred halls!*

Beautiful Moscow brave and bright,  
Whose banners floated toward the light  
When Asia knocked at Europe's door  
And bleeding tzars paid off our score—  
Ah, shining city, far away  
Your gaudy spires salute the day  
Like opal-hearted iris flowers  
Decking the blue transparent hours.  
Now from your seat the slim rails run  
Through Asia to the rising sun,

Along the ancient highway made  
By caravan and cavalcade.  
Still East and West meet at your gate—  
That Kremlin gate where once in state  
Great Europe's conqueror, seeking room,  
Marched through triumphant to his doom.  
Proud Moscow of barbaric tzars,  
Of gorgeous crownings and dark wars,  
Jewel-encrusted, rich with age,  
Heir of a lordly heritage,  
Look out from Ivan's tower of bells—  
See, the vast East is proud with day!  
Soon to your ancient citadels  
The world will march the Asian way.

*White Moscow of the pearly towers,  
And golden domes for praise  
And chiming hours!  
Red Moscow of the Kremlin walls,  
And bloody battle ways  
And fire-scarred halls!*

## PEKING

Under her yellow roofs adream  
The imperial city sleeps in state,  
While warrior nations, flags agleam,  
Come marching through her fortress gate.  
Beneath her towered wall, one by one,  
The slow contemptuous camels tread,  
And through it eager engines run  
Over the dust of ages dead.  
Peking! close bound in triple walls,  
Between the old and new she lies;  
The yellow dragon guards her halls,  
The blare of trumpets fills her skies.  
She stirs out of her age-long sleep  
By the worn temples chill and still,  
Where Sung and Ming and Mongol keep  
Their ghostly watch from hill to hill.  
Over the graves of dynasties  
The winds of dawn blow free and far—  
Heralds of hastening centuries,  
With banners flown for peace or war.

*O brooding East!*  
*O winds of dawn!*

*From the night-long feast  
The kings are gone.  
What guests will come  
Down the world's highway  
At the roll of the drum  
For the day?*

## A LETTER FROM PEKING

*October 15th, 1910.*

MY friend, dear friend, why should I hear  
your voice

Over the Babel of voices, suddenly  
Calling as from the new world to the old?  
Hush!—are you weary? would you follow me?  
Would you make dark the house, and shut the  
door,

Summon steam-pacing trains, wave-racing ships,  
To bear you past the high assembled nations—  
Past the loud cries, the plucking hands of the  
age—

Even to the East that drowns on her throne?

Come then—it's good to be alive today;  
For yesterday is dead, and dim tomorrow  
Flits like a ghost before us, threatening

Our peering eyes with mistily flapping wings.  
Grandly the streets loom upward; huge sky-  
scrapers

Catch at the glory of the sunrise, wear  
The morning like a mantle, bare their heads  
In praise and prayer. And with us on the pave-  
ment,

Above us in the air there, and below,  
Under our feet, by train and tram and subway,  
The people bear the burden of the age—  
Each to his work, each to his love, his dream,  
The little secret vision of his soul,  
Veiled, muffled, trampled, baffled, but agleam:  
Our people, eager to work, eager to laugh,  
Eager to love—if but to love were easy,  
Pausing not for the slow and difficult thing  
As they push past their neighbors to the goal.

Now to the ship—down the long crowded  
wharves,  
The tangle of souls and voices threading thinly  
Through the slight gangway. Do you see her  
there—  
Huge, black, incredible, fortress-walled in steel,

Hiding her heart of fire? She has no fear;  
The fierce waves leap at her, the arrogant  
    storms  
Tease at her flying heels, the boastful winds  
Front her in vain. Superb, invincible,  
From world to world, over the ravenous ocean  
Grandly she bears the fruitage of the time:  
Rich fields of corn, mill-yields of goods, long  
    train-loads  
Of strong machines, man's hope and love and  
    power  
Sealed in a million letters, and at last  
Even us, the little human mustard seeds—  
Dark earth-specks with the kingdom of heaven  
    within.

Gaily we tread the deck, softly we sleep,  
Lightly we chatter away the idle days,  
While strong hands, from dark hold to sunny  
    mast,  
Do our enormous tasks. And now at last  
The world again, low chalky cliffs, the shore,  
Parked England silvery green, her viny case-  
    ments



And dewy lawns, her iron towns of toil  
Smoke-bound, unfree. And London, stony  
London,  
Gray storehouse of the heaped-up centuries,  
Of hidden sins and valors, locked-in joys;  
London the empire-hearted, grave with cares  
Under her tawny sky that dulls the sun.

We linger not—swiftly the new age runs  
And he must haste who takes her by the hand.  
Over the Channel! Come! the little houses  
And patchwork fields of France. Paris full-  
blown,  
The red red rose of the world, whose golden  
heart  
Lies bare to the greedy sun, whose petals  
droop  
Ever so softly to the falling time,  
Most lovely at the signal hour of change.  
Germany then, the little patterned cities  
Of the old time swept, garnished for the new;  
The ancient halls hung with the ancient art,  
And musical with high-stringed orchestras  
Playing melodious prophecies; gay Berlin,

Garish, unmellowed, pale, but full of hope,  
And proud desire.

Ah whither do they march,  
These nations with the sweat upon their brows,  
Huge burden-bearers, panoplied in steel,  
Facing bleak mists of doubt? Will they cast  
down  
Their heavy fears and bathe their brows in  
light  
And freely run across the fields of dawn—  
Children of joy, blood brothers born in love,  
Valiant for peace as once for murderous war?  
Nearer they draw, trimly the sharp rails cut  
Their boundaries—twin scissor-blades of fate.  
Swift steamers tie their ports together, bring  
Tourist ambassadors from state to state.  
Bold man-birds fly through the unsentined air,  
And cobweb wires invisible, more strong  
Than chains of steel, are spun from tower to  
tower,  
Bridging the oceans, linking capitals,  
Binding men's hearts. O kings of the peopled  
earth,

O men, rulers of kings, dare you resist  
Warriors of science, who are blazing trails  
Your statesmanship must travel to new goals?  
Laggards, beware lest the advancing myriads,  
Bound for the promised land, trample you  
down!

Dark Russia, standing at the Asian gate,  
Questions us with her eastward-peering eyes.  
Proud Moscow from her hundred towers looks  
out—

Moscow, bejeweled with domes, magnificent,  
Out of her past barbaric gazes far  
Into the future, swings her Kremlin portal  
To show the sad Siberian wilderness,  
And bids us follow through the autumnal days.  
Softly we slip along the garnered fields,  
Past clustered villages, low-thatched and brown,  
Each with a gay church gilded; shimmer down  
The shining Urals, and salute at last  
Great Asia where in solitude she waits  
Under the northern star.

Her forest then,  
Level and low; dark little pines, thin birches

Their leaves all golden on the silver stems.  
And square-faced peasants crowding to the  
train,  
Slow, sleepy-eyed, thick-bearded. Onward still  
Through the stark plains; Baikal blue in its  
mountains,  
The home of wheeling birds that dive and soar.  
And by and by a dragon-guarded roof  
With gay beasts perched along its tips, that lift  
Like the slim corner of a pale new moon  
Poised in the sky at sunset.

We have come  
To the first gate of the world. The still Pa-  
cific  
Glitters between the hills. Dark crowds  
astare  
Greet us with chatter and laughter—beardless  
men  
With shaven brows and long thin tasseled  
braids,  
Clad in dim blue under the darkening sun.  
The obliterating night curtains our eyes,  
And when at last the red dawn draws the veil

A heavy wall looms over us gray and stern  
With towered gates fortress-guarded. And  
our engine,  
Steaming and shrieking past the caravans—  
The shaggy ponies, little loaded asses,  
The slow processional camels pacing down—  
Scatters the dust of time, pierces the wall,  
And pauses under the shadow of yellow roofs  
Where the Forbidden City, wide and still,  
Lies dreaming in her sunrise-slanting woods.

Peking! She faces us with marble eyes  
Inscrutable. She hearkens to our noise  
And guards her secret. Shall we win her over—  
We with our guns, our dark machines, our man-  
sions  
High piled above her lowly curving roofs;  
We with our loud commands? Will she arise,  
Weary of silence, wave her yellow flag,  
Summon her myriads for the modern race,  
The huge new tasks, the war for love and light?  
Hush! If we wait and listen, will she speak,  
Wise woman or child, veiled queen of the dra-  
gon throne?

Softly! no steamer, elbowing storms aside,  
No engine, nosing through the ancient wall,  
No hurrying foot, no soul worn or at war,  
Shall penetrate the Circle and the Square,  
Set with sweet woods, the green wall and the  
blue,  
And touch the three rings of the Temple of  
Heaven,  
The terraced marble seat, cloud-carved and  
fair,  
Where, at the Centre of the Earth, in peace,  
The tranquil East, contemplative, serene,  
Dwells with the sun and moon.

Hush—bare your head  
And strip your spirit free. When you have  
won  
The ultimate Wisdom, seek the wingèd portal  
Once more. Then she, the sage, may rise to  
you,  
Hold converse with you, pilgrim of the age,  
And take you to her heart and bless your gifts,  
And be as one with you forevermore.

## II. YOU AND I





## MYSELF

WHAT am I? I am Earth the mother,  
With all her nebulous memories;  
And the young Day, and Night her brother,  
And every god that was and is.

As Eve I walked in paradise,  
Dreaming of nations, braving death  
For knowledge; nor begrudged the price  
When the first baby first drew breath.

I sang Deborah's triumph song;  
I struck the foe with Judith's sword;  
'Twas I who to the angel said,  
"Behold the handmaid of the Lord!"

I was fair Helen, she for whom  
A nation was content to die;  
And Cleopatra, in whose doom  
The world went down with Antony.

I am the harlot in the street,  
And the veiled nun all undefiled;  
In me must queen and beggar meet,  
Wise age hark to the little child.

I am the life that ever is,  
And the new glory that shall be;  
The pain that dies, and the brave bliss  
That mounts to immortality.

## THE INNER SILENCE

Noises that strive to tear  
Earth's mantle soft of air  
And break upon the stillness where it dwells:  
The noise of battle and the noise of prayer,  
The cooing noise of love that softly tells  
Joy's brevity, the brazen noise of laughter—  
All these affront me not, nor echo after  
Through the long memories.  
They may not enter the deep chamber where  
Forever silence is.

Silence more soft than spring hides in the  
ground  
Beneath her budding flowers;  
Silence more rich than ever was the sound  
Of harps through long warm hours,  
'Tis like a hidden vastness, even as though

Great suns might there beat out their measures  
slow

Nor break the hush mightier than they.

There do I dwell eternally,

There where no thought may follow me,  
Nor stillest dreams whose pinions plume the  
way.

## THE WONDER OF IT

How wild, how witch-like weird that life should  
be!

That the insensate rock dared dream of me,  
And take to bursting out and burgeoning—

Oh, long ago—yo ho!—

And wearing green! How stark and strange a  
thing

That life should be!

Oh mystic mad, a rigadon of glee,

That dust should rise, and leap alive, and flee  
Afoot, awing, and shake the deeps with cries—

Oh, far away—yo hay!

What moony masque, what arrogant disguise  
That life should be!

## A GARDEN IN THE DESERT

So light and soft the days fall—  
Like petals one by one  
Down from yon tree whose flowers all  
Must vanish in the sun.

Like almond-petals down, dear,  
Odorous, rosy-white,  
Falling to our green world here  
Off the thick boughs of night.

One like another still lies—  
Tomorrow is today.  
Always the buzzing bee flies,  
Who never flies away.

Ever the same blue sky rounds  
Its chalice for the sun.  
The mountains at the world's bounds  
Their purple chorals run.

And ever you and I, friend,  
Free of this mortal scheme,  
Look out beyond desire's end  
And dream the spacious dream.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE WIND

THE wind comes riding down from heaven.

Ho! wind of heaven, what do you bring?

Cool for the dawn, dew for the even,

And every sweetest thing.

O wind of heaven, from pink clouds driven,

What do you bring to me?

The low call of thy love who waits

Under the willow tree,

Whose boat upon the water waits

For me, for thee.



## LOVE SONGS

### I

I LOVE my life, but not too well  
To give it to thee like a flower,  
So it may pleasure thee to dwell  
Deep in its perfume but an hour.  
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well  
To sing it note by note away,  
So to thy soul the song may tell  
The beauty of the desolate day.  
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well  
To cast it like a cloak on thine,  
Against the storms that sound and swell  
Between thy lonely heart and mine.  
I love my life, but not too well.

## II

Your love is like a blue, blue wave  
The little rainbows play in.  
Your love is like a mountain cave  
Cool shadows darkly stay in.

It thrills me like great gales at war,  
It soothes like softest singing.  
It bears me where clear rivers are,  
With reeds and rushes swinging;  
Or out to pearly shores afar  
Where temple bells are ringing.

## III

And is it pain to you  
That we must love and part?  
Ah, if you only knew  
The gladness in my heart!

Love is enough. Each day  
I look upon the sun,  
He loves me! I shall say,  
Now is my life begun.

He loves me! Every night,  
On the dark verge of sleep,  
The rapture will alight  
And to my bosom creep.

Peace, for I should not dare  
A keener joy implore.  
My soul shall feel no care—  
Until you love no more.

## IN TUOLUMNE MEADOWS

I LOVE to sit in the sun  
And watch the foaming Lyell  
Leap over its granite bed.  
I love these days that run  
On a burnished golden dial  
With the blue sky overhead.

I love to waken at night  
And whisper the stars above me,  
And feel the fingering breeze.  
So still is the world, so right,  
Where even the black pines love me,  
And the white moon guards my ease.

I love the upward ways  
To the sun-tipped crest of the mountains  
High over the billowy world;  
Where the wind sings hymns of praise,

And the snows break into fountains,  
And life is a flag unfurled.

I love—ah, beloved, what bliss  
Would shatter the ice like a river  
And sing all the way to the sea,  
If the world could be lost for this,  
And you from your sorrow forever  
Could rest on the heart of me!

## A FAREWELL

GOOD-BYE!—no, do not grieve that it is over,  
The perfect hour;  
That the winged joy, sweet honey-loving rover,  
Flits from the flower.

Grieve not—it is the law. Love will be  
flying—  
Yes, love and all.  
Glad was the living—blessed be the dying.  
Let the leaves fall.

## A LETTER TO ONE FAR AWAY

DEAR WANDERER—  
The sky is gray,  
With flecks of blue  
The clouds rush over.  
A bird is singing  
Far away,  
And butterflies  
Taste of the clover.  
Under the trees  
My hammock swings,  
And a brave breeze—  
The restless rover—  
Flutters the leaves  
And stirs the grasses  
And, whispering riddles,  
Lightly passes.  
Day after day  
My friend and I

Climb up the hills  
And search the valleys;  
Dip in the brook  
That ripples by  
And through clear pools  
Serenely dallies.  
All green and gold,  
All song and sweetness,  
The old earth is  
For summer's pleasure;  
Who kisses and goes,  
Whose love is fleetness,  
Who gives but a season  
But gives without measure.  
Away with time!—  
His wand I capture,  
He rules no more  
For this brief minute.  
The years are gone—  
Once more the rapture,  
The night of stars  
With the secret in it.  
Ah, if you were here  
Should I grant, I wonder,



The whole round truth  
For a birthday token—  
How today, tomorrow,  
Together, asunder,  
We are—no, hush!—  
It is best unspoken.  
Oh, the truest truth—  
No words dare say it!  
It hides in the heart  
From the poor tongue's treason;  
And the deepest joy—  
We may never pray it.  
It comes and goes  
With nor rule nor reason.  
Look up!—the sun  
Through the clouds' gray portal!  
And see—white plumes  
In the blue below it!  
Behold the dream,  
Wide-winged, immortal!  
Did I hear your voice?  
You are here—I know it!



### III. OTHER PEOPLE



## THE WOMAN

*Go sleep, my sweetie—rest—rest!*  
*Oh soft little hand on mother's breast!*  
*Oh soft little lips—the din's mos' gone—*  
*Over and done, my dearie one!*

WHAT do I think, my brother? Look at me!  
You make me laugh, sitting there solemn-  
eyed,  
Full of opinions, theories!—asking me—  
Look—with my baby at my breast—to tell  
you,  
Blessed big uncle!—what I think—heaven help  
me!—  
Of this and that. How could you think, I  
wonder,  
If baby lips were tugging at your flesh,  
Draining your life to flower the world?

Dear brother,  
It's beautiful, that masculine pride of yours,  
That runs the universe—oh yes, I know,  
And longs to run it well. You travel, observe,  
Experiment, make laws and governments,  
Build strange machines and masterfully summon  
The elemental powers to do your work—  
Why?—so my girl here, darling hope of the  
race,  
May pillow her round head in a softer bed,  
And dance more lightly by and by—God bless  
her—  
Into her lover's arms.

*Ah precious!—hungry still, my bird?  
Coo, coo—yes, darling, mother heard.  
Coo, coo—and is it true?—  
Ever so true?*

What do I think?  
If I were arrogant, extravagant—  
As men have never been!—what would I think,  
Now in this hour of pride, with all the future

Safe in my arms? Almost I might dare whisper

That it's a woman's world—do they not say it  
In the great book of science, the new song,  
Epic of truth? Let me but hear the word  
In reverence—almost a woman's world!

We hold the race within us, we enfold  
Life in our arms, we do great nature's work;  
So nature hoards and wastes for us, they  
say,

Contrives our essence from her richer store,  
And makes the haughty male out of the rest—  
You among others, with your politics,  
Your grand reforms, your dreams! Hush! do  
you dare

Follow from seedling sea-drift up to man  
Life's long procession, noting everywhere  
How the encompassing mother mothers us,  
And leaves your kind to shiver and drone and  
die?

Or else, in pity, the less vital tasks  
She gives you—bids you serve us, fight for us,  
Even sing for us; and cunningly contrive  
To shelter and defend us, till the earth

Is heavy with strange erections, and the air  
Is noisy with ideas.

Oh yes, I know—

You've got the upper hand, you run the world,  
Think so at least; at many an icy hearth  
You do your will with us; and we—poor chat-  
tels—

Meekly we take our fortune at your hands,  
With never a royal word to prove us women,  
Not slaves. Why do we yield, abase our-  
selves,

If we are nature's favorites, till even  
The mighty mother who made us in her image  
Rejects us, winnows her worthless chaff away:  
Poor drudges, eating the heart of the race for  
bread;

Poor puppets, wilfully idle, wilfully barren,  
Teasers of men—riff-raff and refuse all!

Why should we suffer this in a woman's  
world?

Good God, I wonder sometimes, hang my head  
For our surrender. Ah, we clasp too close



The burden on our hearts, nor look abroad  
Through our long windy night of passion and  
pain.

And still at dawn we rub our sleepy eyes,  
Here at the hearth with morning in our arms—  
Pink-dimpled baby morning, look at her!—  
Waiting for you, our powerful delegates,  
To chase the night away.

But is it strange?  
Think but a moment, ask yourself, my  
brother—

You who tell me to think—what is our life,  
Our woman's life? Out of delicious youth,  
Murmurous, odorous, vague, full of delights  
Half won, half apprehended, suddenly,  
Like a still stream seized by the ruthless ocean,  
We are drawn to the deeps. Love, marriage,  
motherhood—

We are drowned in the physical, sensual;  
washed over

With tide on tide of feeling warm and red—  
The heart's-blood of the world. Little pitiless  
hands

Grip us within, throttle us, hold us down  
Through the long moons of feebleness and  
pain.

Little souls adrift, gathering out of the void,  
Bring us their nebulous dreams, vague, inco-  
herent,

Far lightning-flashes caught from flaming stars.  
No longer free, no more our own, or yours,  
No longer of this world, but of all worlds,  
We are borne by the vast tide, the tide of  
storms,

Life irresistible, universal, deep,  
Out of that no-man's-land, that isle of pain,  
Where birth and death fight in the dark to-  
gether

For the new soul, the new little infant world,  
Bearer of tidings, saviour of the race—  
The child.

Then, wonder of wonders, comes  
The change. All glowing, from his great white  
throne

God stoops to us; we see the splendor, we hear  
The thronging harps, we feel here in our arms

His presence forming softly, clasping close  
Into a little tender human thing—  
Our own, ours, ours. Then suddenly for a moment  
We are swept away by joy magnificent,  
And from high heaven watch the brave world  
go by.

Read the old story—it's our Bethlehem.  
We couch in a manger, bring forth young like  
beasts  
In blood and shame and agony, and then  
Rise with the living God safe in our arms.

Well, after that what are your grand affairs,  
Your brave ideas, your dreams? We scarcely  
heed  
Your world-building, we leave you to your  
work,  
Praising your strength, your imperious leadership,  
Your craft that skims the sea and wings the  
air

And sends love-words all round the girdled  
world

Before these blue eyes, almost locked in sleep,  
Open to make the dawn. Oh wonderful

Your power and cunning! Should we envy  
you

The triumph, the high renown, when in our  
arms

We hold all life—even you, the doer, the pres-  
ent,

And this, the ultimate future of our dreams?

Look—she's asleep. Isn't she a drop of dew  
Mirroring moonlight? Or a velvet petal

Dropped from the almond tree all pearly  
pink

That grows in Sahuaro Valley? Or a spring,  
Cool, still, where all the birds of the air shall  
drink

Before it flows through the wide fields of the  
world,

The thick dark woods, to wander who knows  
where,

Love-led, love-nourished? Oh, be wise for her,

My brother! Smooth her flowery-scented  
ways—

We give you this to do.

But if you falter,  
If, blinded by the dust and smothered in spoils,  
You strive for trophies and forget the goal,  
Must I not rise out of my sheltered seat  
At last? When I can empty my arms of her,  
Turn from the happy garden where I dwell  
And look over the world, what do I see  
Under the cloud-capped towers and pinnacles?  
Cities I see where little children drudge  
The strength of the race away; gaunt fac-  
tories  
Where girls and boys are withered at the  
loom,  
The wheel, the furnace; festering tenements  
Where babies—tiny tender things like mine—  
Are born in filth and darkness, to endure  
Starved little wretched lives, or die like rats  
While their pale mothers earn a pitiful dole  
By day and night in the one huddled room.  
In tainted slums, in poison-factories,

In sulphurous mines, in roaring steam-driven  
mills

Where human hearts are broken on the  
wheel;

In jails where law wreaks a self-righteous  
vengeance

On the less masterful crimes; in gaudy brothels,  
Where daughters of the race—yes, mine and  
yours,

Once dewy in their mothers' arms like this—  
Rot into slaves of lust; in all dark places,  
Unaware of love, unvisited of the sun,  
I count the agonies of our lorded world.

I see that delicate lovely thing called life—  
My charge, my woman's business, God forgive  
me!—

Crushed into clay, mortared with blood and  
tears,

For modern civilization, huge sky-scraper,  
To tower its many-windowed stories on.  
And through those glaring windows I be-  
hold

A riot of waste, a sickening glut, an orgy—  
Life turned once more to loathing and despair.

So, though I bear my baby in my arms,  
Now must I tread the crowded ways of the  
world.

Help me to rise, give me your powerful hand,  
My brother; lead me forth to do my part,  
Too long content to rest here in my garden  
Love-sheltered. *Mea culpa*—I have sinned.  
Vast is the world, our steel-blown, power-driven  
world;

Too huge a grand machine for half the race  
To build, and run, and guard from rust and  
filth,

While we, the other half, cling to the hearth,  
Selfishly guard our own, and give no aid  
Through the long heat and burden of the  
day.

Now we are summoned, for the hour is struck.  
We have over-strained your strength, we have  
over-trusted

Your zeal. Now must we take our burden  
back—

The burden of life you bear but fitfully—  
And nourish on warm breasts the suffering  
world.

*Come, curly pearly one, my bird,  
My primrose folding up at night!  
Sleep warm and tight!  
Never a word  
Till it is light!  
Softly, softly, down in your bed,  
Round little toes to round little head,  
Sleep, sleep, my weary one,  
Mother's dearie one!*



## THE SHADOW-CHILD

*Why do the wheels go whirring round,  
Mother, mother?*

*Oh, mother, are they giants bound,  
And will they growl forever?*

Yes, fiery giants underground,  
Daughter, little daughter,  
Forever turn the wheels around,  
And rumble-grumble ever.

*Why do I pick the threads all day,  
Mother, mother,  
While sunshine children are at play?  
And must I work forever?*

Yes, shadow-child; the live-long day,  
Daughter, little daughter,  
Your hands must pick the threads away,  
And feel the sunshine never.

*Why do the birds sing in the sun,  
Mother, mother,  
If all day long I run and run,  
Run with the wheels forever?  
The birds may sing till day is done,  
Daughter, little daughter,  
But with the wheels your feet must run—  
Run with the wheels forever.*

*Why do I feel so tired each night,  
Mother, mother?  
The wheels are always buzzing bright;  
Do they grow sleepy never?  
Oh, baby thing, so soft and white,  
Daughter, little daughter,  
The big wheels grind us in their might,  
And they will grind forever.*

*And is the white thread never spun,  
Mother, mother?  
And is the white cloth never done,  
For you and me done never?  
Oh yes, our thread will all be spun,  
Daughter, little daughter,*

When we lie down out in the sun,  
And work no more forever.

*And when will come that happy day,  
Mother, mother?*

*Oh, shall we laugh and sing and play  
Out in the sun forever?*

Nay, shadow-child, we'll rest all day,  
Daughter, little daughter,  
Where green grass grows and roses gay,  
There in the sun forever.

## THE MODEL

HAVE you forgotten—you, the chief,  
The art-director, president,  
What not, of the establishment—  
Forgot how for a moment brief  
The whole show, all our strife and stir,  
Went out—for her?

You led me through your galleries  
And dreams—the pictures new and old  
And good and bad, the battles bold  
You fought with principalities  
And powers. We chaffed and laughed away  
Such woes that day!

And built such castles domed and towered  
For Art to live in by and by,  
When men should know the How and Why;  
For Art to live in, throned and dowered,

When the world's works and ways should be  
Both fair and free.

From hope to rage and back again  
We flashed, flung curses red as bombs  
At the dull age, lit hecatombs  
Of lies and laws and flaws, and then  
Reached for the stars and plucked them down  
To make man's crown.

The Truth!—that was our cry—the Truth,  
Whose heart and mind, whose lips and eyes,  
Her first glance and her last surprise,  
Are Beauty. All the while, forsooth,  
Bold Chance, the blind interpreter,  
Led us—to her.

A school door swung—and she was there!  
Strange, how the proud world slunk away  
And left her with the waning day  
Alone. All vanished unaware—  
The class, the great high-windowed hall,  
And we, and all.

Yes, all our plans, the futile show  
Of art, wherewith rash man aspires  
To breathe into the dust life's fires,  
And be as God. She stood aglow  
Fresh from God's hand. 'Twas all in vain—  
Our hope, our pain.

God beat us at the game. For her  
The dim day flared with rose and gold.  
A slim moon softly aureoled,  
She shone apart and would not stir,  
Hesitant at the rim of space,  
Veiling her face.

Out in the dream she rose—afar—  
With Eve, new-flowered in paradise;  
With Helen, whose effulgent eyes  
Men sang to through the crash of war;  
With Aphrodite, foam-empearled,  
Kindling the world.

The winds of doom grew soft for her,  
Nor dared even touch the curls that hid  
Her face in dusky gold; nor chid

With change, that recreant pillager,  
Her still, immortal loveliness,  
So brave to bless.

The place a temple was, and we,  
Tricked out with odds and ends of faith—  
Mere rags worn thin by life and death—  
Profaned the immaculate mystery,  
Looked on the truth with blasphemous eyes,  
Afraid to rise.

The moment met us and was gone,  
The proof of all and the despair.  
We sought the dark, growing aware  
Of our stript souls; and then anon  
Tried all in vain to tread again  
The ways of men.

The bold words died upon our lips,  
The clatter of our feet grew still.  
Even now—ah, does it waft your will  
Through ether-seas in wingèd ships—  
The sight of her beyond shut eyes,  
The white surprise?

## HIS STENOGRAPHER

*As he dictates to her*

DOES she love you?—well, I wonder—  
Married twenty years, they say!  
You, so bald and fat and funny,  
Grubbing like a mole for money?  
Guess she likes to spend the plunder—  
Gee!—she knows the way!

She's a grand one—Lord! what dresses!  
Handsome too, proud as a queen—  
With her doings in the papers,  
Dinners, dances, all the capers,  
Likes to lead the show, my guess is!  
You're the gold machine!

If she knew you as I know you,  
Would she spend it—say?



If she knew each trick and quibble—  
Little fishes hooked that nibble,  
Business murders—would she show you  
Such a grand-stand play?

You're a savage money-maker—  
Good to her, though, sure—and me.  
Kind old pirate! What in thunder  
Does she think of you, I wonder?  
What neat stories do you take her,  
So she will not see?

## DESERTED

O LOVE, my love, it's over then—  
Your heart flies free;  
And it's now no more us two again,  
The door on you and me.  
And it's now no more the supper spread,  
The stove singing low.  
Oh, worlds away your feet are led,  
Where wild winds blow!

Oh, seas between and worlds away  
Our paths run now.  
Go, for more dead than coffined clay  
Is love's dead vow.  
Go, may your bread be sweet, your rest  
As soft and deep be  
As when you slept upon my breast  
And gave the world for me.

Go, for my heart cries out with pain,  
    With joy cries out.  
Go! you've unwound the golden chain—  
    Love's hope, love's doubt.  
Go! you were mine—now mine shall be  
    The whole brave world.  
My spirit flutters and is free,  
    With wings unfurled.

Out of my little house of bliss,  
    O lost love sweet,  
Out of my grief and loneliness  
    Now will I rise to greet  
My friend who begs in the street below,  
    My friend who prays above;  
And each will be—oh, well I know!—  
    You—you, lost love.

## AFTER SUNSET

THE forest was a shrine for her,  
A temple richly dressed;  
And worshippers the tall trees were,  
Each to his prayer addressed.  
Scarce dared I lift my eyes, or stir,  
So deeply was I blessed.

She took to herself the waning day  
Like a round twilight moon,  
Serenely rising far away—  
A silvery moon of June,  
That whiter than the morning is  
And fairer than the noon.

The dim world darkened round her—all  
Was night save where she shone,  
Save where she stood so slim and small  
The shadowed earth upon;  
As though the earth were new, and she  
Would light its fires anon.

## A LITTLE OLD MAID

SHE grew, like other girls and flowers,  
Sheltered and tended daintily;  
And told her dolls, through sunny hours,  
A prince would come her love to be.

And none denied her as she grew  
The kingdom where her prince was lord.  
For him she bloomed, and drank the dew  
Of youth, and wore the virgin's sword.

From her strong tower of maidenhood  
She saw brave men ride east and west;  
And dreamed of peace in love's deep wood,  
With babies nestling on her breast.

And when no knight her banner bore,  
Nor hailed her with love's accolade,

Silent beside her open door  
She wondered first, then grew afraid:

Afraid of quickened dust whereof  
Life made but phantoms for a show;  
Afraid of laughter and of love,  
Of God and his unchanging No.

And things the world calls wise and good  
She did to bid her fear be still;  
Gave largess of her brains and blood,  
Chastened her bold, far-wandering will.

But, withering ever at the heart,  
She felt her spirit die unborn.  
A ghost, she moved on earth apart,  
And feared to face the angels' scorn.

## THE FORTUNATE ONE

BESIDE her ashen hearth she sate her down,  
Whence he she loved had fled,  
His children plucking at her sombre gown  
And calling for the dead.

One came to her clad in the robes of May  
And said sweet words of cheer,  
Bidding her bear her burden in God's way  
And feel her loved one near.

Yet she who spoke thus would have given,  
thrice blest,  
Long lives of happy years  
To clasp his children to a mother's breast  
And weep his widow's tears.

NANCY HANKS

PRAIRIE child,  
Brief as dew,  
What winds of wonder  
Nourished you?

Rolling plains  
Of billowy green,  
Far horizons,  
Blue, serene;

Lofty skies  
The slow clouds climb,  
Where burning stars  
Beat out the time:

These, and the dreams  
Of fathers bold,  
Baffled longings,  
Hopes untold,



Gave to you  
A heart of fire,  
Love like deep waters,  
Brave desire.

Ah, when youth's rapture  
Went out in pain,  
And all seemed over,  
Was all in vain?

O soul obscure,  
Whose wings life bound,  
And soft death folded  
Under the ground;

Wilding lady,  
Still and true,  
Who gave us Lincoln  
And never knew:

To you at last  
Our praise, our tears,  
Love and a song  
Through the nation's years!

Mother of Lincoln,  
Our tears, our praise;  
A battle-flag  
And the victor's bays!

## MATERNITY

AFTER the months of torpor,  
Weakness and ache and strain,  
After this day's deep drowning  
In stormy seas of pain—  
To feel your hand, my baby,  
Upon my bosom lain!

My little one, my baby,  
What woes your touches quell!  
It is the Christ-child coming  
To save a soul from hell.  
Out in the happy gardens  
You bring me now to dwell.

My baby—O beloved,  
Mine only you shall be,  
Even as the soul our Lord's is,  
Who died upon the tree.

Have I not won you, dearest,  
By pain, as he won me?

So sweet, so soft, so little,  
Such a wee helpless flower!  
How may I shield you, dear one,  
From the world's ruthless power,  
And hold you close and warm here,  
As now in your first hour?

## NEW-BORN

SHE is so wee,  
So wise and dear  
Her eyes can see,  
Her ears can hear,  
The flowers that grow  
Below the snow,  
The birds that peep  
In their eggs asleep,  
The songs we sing her  
No other has heard,  
The love we bring her  
With never a word.

## MELODIES

THE patter of a baby's feet  
Upon the floor,  
His babble at the door—  
Ah, these are sounds too sweet, too sweet!  
Blue sky, save me from tears!  
Soft summer wind, stop up mine ears!  
The patter of a baby's feet,  
His chatter—oh, too tender sweet!

## THE CHILDLESS WOMAN

O MOTHER of that heap of clay, so passive on  
your breast,

Now do you stare at death, woman, who yesterday were blest?

Now do you long to fare afar, and guide him  
on the way

Where he must wander all alone, his little feet  
astray?

But I now, but I now—

Sons of me seven and seven

The high God seals upon the brow,

And summons from his heaven.

Blest as a bride were you, woman, that time of  
years ago,

When love, giver of life, came close and led  
you to his throne.

And blest were you—have you forgot?—when  
    through the moons of pain  
The life love-given tugged at your heart and  
    bound you with its chain.  
But I now, but I now—  
    Seared by the high God's scorn—  
Lives that will never come to birth  
    Body of me has borne.

And when the hour was come, woman, your  
    dark and perilous hour,  
When the twin spirits, Death and Life, clutched  
    you with jealous power,  
Rent by their war you lay half lost, until a  
    baby's cry  
Summoned you forth past world on world to  
    sit with God on high.  
But I now, but I now—  
    Never my baby's voice  
Has called me forth from vales of woe  
    With seraphs to rejoice.

You in your arms have clasped him, woman,  
    and fed him at your breast.



You sang him little songs at night, and lulled  
him to his rest.

The ages gone were yours then, and yours the  
years to be.

You gave him of your hope and saw the light  
no eye shall see.

But I now, but I now—

Sons of me born in dream

Cry out for robes of flesh; I see

Their wistful eyes agleam.

O mother of that heap of clay so passive on  
your breast—

Now do you stare at death, woman?—nay,  
peace, for you are blest.

Blest are you in your joy, woman, blest are you  
in your pain—

Once more he calls you past the worlds to sit  
with God again.

But I now, but I now—

Sons of me nine and nine,

That looked on life and death with me,

Are neither God's nor mine.

## A STORY

HE loved her and he was untrue—  
Untrue he was, let loved her still;  
For out of nether darkness drew  
The winds that lashed his wandering will.

She lived in joy all unaware,  
In pain and joy his children bore,  
While hidden spectres of despair  
Drove him to love her more and more.

And when she knew the truth at last,  
Suddenly she grew still and strange.  
Her rag of haggard youth was cast  
Upon the evil winds of change.

She heard, and could not understand;  
She paled, and could not bloom again.  
So bland death took her by the hand,  
Looked in her eyes and made all plain.

Yes, wise death taught her all, and so,  
Smiling once more, she kissed and passed.  
And he, caught in life's overthrow,  
Faced love and death alone at last.

At last, made strong by love and death,  
He gave her truth for truth, and knew  
Now she had won his perfect faith.  
Dying, she doomed him to be true.

## A PORTRAIT

THE little world span round and round,  
Singing along her sunny ways,  
And all the glory she unwound  
She gave to him for joy and praise.

And he, whom lavish morning met  
With new-blown flowers and minstrelsy,  
Looked on the gift through eyelids wet  
For sorrow of satiety.

And he, whom noon put to the proof,  
With trumpet-call and weapon blessed,  
Fought the brave fight with soul aloof  
Harkening for some remote behest.

Not homeward could the winged feet fare,  
The lyric laughter choked a sigh—  
A wanderer from he knew not where,  
Dreamer of dreams, he knew not why.

## THE MOCKERY

SOMETIMES I laugh—what else can a man do  
Who does not know? This little ego here  
Braving the void, this fleck upon the blue,  
This filmy wing sounding the starry sphere—  
What bold abysmal incongruity,  
What joke of the gods to make a mock of me!

I hear you sing, and wonder how you dare.  
Too fine for song they are—the tint of the rose,  
The touch of a child, love's beauty and despair,  
All the sad furtive exquisiteness that blows,  
Like scent of gardens I may never see,  
Across my sense to make a mock of me.

That I, this atom infinitesimal,  
This chance-blown seed of flesh and fire, that I  
Should front the dread immensity, the all,  
Shocking the silence with my futile cry—  
What dark inscrutable absurdity,  
What joke of the gods to make a mock of me!

## THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

THREE crosses rose on Calvary against the iron  
sky,  
Each with its living burden, each with its hu-  
man cry.  
And all the ages watched there, and there were  
you and I.

One bore the God incarnate, reviled by man's  
disdain,  
Who through the woe he suffered for our eter-  
nal gain  
With joy of infinite loving assuaged his infinite  
pain.

On one the thief repentant conquered his cruel  
doom,  
Who called at last on Christ and saw his glory  
through the gloom.  
For him after the torment souls of the blest  
made room.

And one the unrepentant bore, who his harsh  
fate defied.

To him, the child of darkness, all mercy was  
denied;

Nailed by his brothers on the cross, he cursed  
his God and died.

Ah, Christ, who met in Paradise him who had  
eyes to see,

Didst thou not greet the other in hell's black  
agony?

And if he knew thy face, Lord, what did he say  
to thee?





#### IV. PICTURES HERE AND THERE



## WHY NOT?

POET, sing me a song to-day!

*But the world grows old and my hair is gray.*

Ah no! there are birds on the lilac bushes  
And a snow-drop out of the wet earth pushes.  
Two chattering robins are planning a marriage,  
And see! there's a baby all pink in its carriage!  
And the sun is wiping the clouds from his brow,  
And who can look back when it's always now?  
Oh, what is the use of a poet, say,  
If he will not sing me a song to-day?

## AT TWILIGHT

You are a painter—listen—  
I'll paint you a picture too!  
Of the long white lights that glisten  
Through Michigan Avenue;  
With the red lights down the middle  
Where the street shines mirror-wet,  
While the rain-strung sky is a fiddle  
For the wind to feel and fret.  
Look! far in the east great spaces  
Meet out on the level lake,  
Where the lit ships veil their faces  
And glide like ghosts at a wake;  
And up in the air, high over  
The rain-shot shimmer of light,  
The huge sky-scrapers hover  
And shake out their stars at the night.  
Oh, the city trails gold tassels  
From the skirts of her purple gown,

And lifts up her commerce castles  
Like a jewel-studded crown.  
See, proudly she moves on, singing  
Up the storm-dimmed track of time—  
Road dark and dire,  
Where each little light  
Is a soul afire  
Against the night!  
Oh, grandly she marches, flinging  
Her gifts at our feet, and singing!—

Have I chalked out a sketch in my rhyme?

## A PLAY FESTIVAL IN OGDEN PARK

OH gay and shining June time!  
Oh meadow brave and bright,  
Abloom with little children,  
All tossing in the light!  
They dance and circle singing—  
Oh, what a joy to see!  
They twinkle in the sunshine,  
They shout in company.

Beyond are pointed houses  
Patterned against the blue,  
With bushes flower-embroidered,  
And trees all trim and true.  
Around are rows of people  
Watching the dainty show,  
Guarding the fairy kingdom  
Where blossom babies blow.

Their merry little footsteps  
Race with the tricky air,  
That puffs their filmy dresses  
And frees their shining hair.  
All pink and white and golden  
Under the round gold sun,  
Winging the wind with laughter,  
They ring and wreath and run.

Oh, sweet and soft the world is,  
Ever so glad and gay,  
All garlanded with children  
Who sing and prank and play!  
You posy girls wide-petalled,  
And boys all round and red,  
Dance in the sun forever  
Till time goes off to bed!

## BATTLE-FLAGS OF ILLINOIS

THROUGH the red dusk of war they flew  
From Shiloh to the sea.  
Black fumes from shattered bolts that blew  
Withered the colors three,  
And crimson rains made sombre stains.

For every flag a grave—yes, more—  
For each a score of graves.  
Crossed are the heroes' hands that bore,  
No wind the furled folds waves.  
Sweet be their rest, by soft peace blest.

Is there no end? What mighty host  
Of spirits ranged for war  
The signal of the Holy Ghost  
Shall summon hence afar!  
Vast armies wait in solemn state.



Where valor fights for freedom—there,  
Till the last slave is free,  
These ragged flags will float in air,  
There will our heroes be.  
And shall we dare fight with them there?

## IN THE LOUVRE

QUEEN KAROMANA, slim you stand,  
In bronze with little flecks of gold—  
Queen Karomana.

O royal lady, lift your hand,  
Shatter the stone museum cold,  
Queen Karomana.

The wide Nile sleeps, the desert stings  
With color. Shake your tresses free,  
Queen Karomana!

The sleepy lotus shines and swings—  
Loose your bound limbs and sail with me  
In a smooth shallop to the sea,  
Queen Karomana!

Queen Karomana, still so mute,  
So delicate, yet cold as snow,  
Queen Karomana?

An ice-wind, boldly resolute,  
    Rippled your thin robe long ago,  
    And froze you into bronze—I know—  
But left your garment's flecks of gold  
And the slim grace men loved of old,  
    Queen Karomana!

## THE TOWER

HE built a tower for all to see,  
With sun-washed gardens planted wide.  
And there with pomp of pageantry,  
With men-at-arms and minstrelsy  
And moonbeam ladies fair and free,  
He revelled in his pride  
And there, with soft prayers muttered slow,  
And wind-blown candles burning low,  
And hooded mourners row on row,  
In pomp of peace he died.

Now time forgets how many a sun  
Above the waste has risen and run  
Since all the feasts were over and done;  
Yet still from rusty pinnacle,  
From cobwebbed pane and broken bell,  
A wind-voice murmurs: Here am I—  
'Twas good to live and die;

And good to rear these carved stones well  
'Twixt laboring earth and dreaming sky.  
And now 'tis good to watch and wait  
While the slow centuries pass in state,  
And make old time my glory tell  
To you who wander by.



## V. OLD STORIES





## THE PRINCESS AND THE PAGE

THERE is a legend—you have read it—

Of a fair page whom evil spells  
Held in deep sleep; and men of credit  
Tried all in vain, the story tells,  
Week after week, by night and noon,  
To wake him from his sombre swoon.

Till one, more knowing than the others,

Took counsel of the stars, and said:  
“We may not rouse this youth, my brothers;  
But if the queen will bow her head  
And kiss him on the lips, his soul  
Straight shall escape the fiend’s control.”

“Then he must perish!” in loud chorus

The learned men lamenting cried;  
“Better to let him die before us  
Than see our queen abase her pride

And shame her fame from north to south,  
Kissing a page upon the mouth."

And so in sorrow they departed  
And through the travelled highways passed.  
But the strange news their story started  
Filled all the land, and reached at last  
The crowded hall where sate alone  
The fair young monarch on her throne.

And she, being royal, rose in beauty  
Like dawn over a leafy hill.  
"Would you then teach your queen her duty?—  
Now lead me forth to do God's will.  
Know, were this youth my meanest slave,  
He should not die whom I could save."

So forth they led her through the palace,  
Beyond the park and past the gate,  
Silent as when a sacred chalice  
Uplifts the rich wine consecrate.  
In royal pomp of robe and crown  
Through field and wood they led her down.

There in a mossy glade lay sleeping  
A youth so beautiful, 'tis said,  
That the still trees were softly keeping  
A solemn vigil round his bed;  
And the birds sang sweet lullabies,  
Fearing lest he should wake and rise.

Then silken-vestured lords and ladies  
Circled him like a garland there,  
Thinking, "Thrice blest our royal maid is  
To kiss to life a thing so fair."  
And many a damsel envied her,  
Feeling the aching pulses stir.

Simply, divinely, like one praying,  
The crowned queen passed their shadowed  
eyes,  
And knelt beside the youth, and saying,  
"Now in God's name I bid thee rise,"  
She bowed and kissed the parted lips,  
Like a white cloud that moonward dips.

And as she rose the pale lids lifted  
Over his dark eyes veiled and drowned,

That slowly back to being drifted  
And in her gaze their refuge found.  
Then slowly, bold with rapture sweet,  
He turned and sank before her feet.

"Give me thy love—I love thee only!"—  
The bold words fluttered like a song.  
"Thy love!" and from her station lonely  
The young queen heard and took no wrong,  
But lifted one white hand to still  
Murmurs that dared rebuke her will.

"Blest is thy love, so freely given,  
As all things freely given are blest.  
Yea, not in vain thy soul hath striven  
Even though I grant not thy behest.  
Over the hills, across the sea,  
The prince comes who my lord shall be."

"Over the hills, across the ocean—"  
The bowed youth echoed, murmuring:  
Then rose, reeling with dark emotion,  
And striving to his dream to cling.

"Nay, if thou love me not, ah why  
Didst thou not leave me here to die?"

"Now, by my crown, thou art not noble  
But basely born," the queen made moan.

"Do penance for thy words ignoble—

Life is not given for love alone.

Oh, purge thee in Christ's altar-flame,

And go to battle in His name."

So saying, from the forest hoary

She passed, with all who marvelled there;

Nor once gazed back—so runs the story—

To see him on his knees in prayer.

But all this came to pass, they say,

Long, long ago, and far away.

## THE LEGEND OF PASS CHRISTIAN

A LIVE-OAK grows by the shallow sea.  
Rest under its boughs, I pray,  
And hear of the pirate—bold was he—  
And the lady he stole away.

He was a black-browed buccaneer,  
And she like a snow-drop white.  
From a scuttled ship he bore her clear  
As it sunk in the haggard night.

And with bell and book he wedded her.  
And shaped her to his will.  
Yet though her body could not stir  
Her soul escaped him still.

*Though we be wed and vows be said,  
Though beaten sore I be,*

*I'm naught of thine, thou'rt naught of  
mine,  
God loose these bonds from me!*

On through long days and nights of woe  
The black ship held its way.  
It faced the iceberg topped with snow,  
It scoured the tropic bay.

Through nights and days of wrath and dread  
The ship sped darkly on.  
Behind it like a trail of red  
Its path glared to the sun.

And fiercer rose the skipper's pride,  
And black his anger grew,  
That he who man and God defied  
One soul could not subdue.

*Ah, many a pain and many a stain  
We women bear for men;  
Yet blest is she whose soul is free  
Even in the dragon's den.*

And when he knew nor time nor fate  
    Could bring him his desire,  
He held dark converse with his hate  
    To find a vengeance dire.

And many an oath to hell he cast  
    While, in the devil's name,  
He bound his lady to the mast  
    And set the ship aflame.

Long hast thou hated me, he cried,  
    Now laugh aloud in glee!  
Though thou shouldst call me o'er the tide,  
    I come not back to thee.

*The sea is deep, and I shall sleep  
    Softly beneath the wave.  
Faith, thou canst kill; now do thy will,  
    And bless me with a grave.*

Swiftly the royal sun dropped down  
    Deep in his purple bed.  
And swiftly, at the skipper's frown,  
    His oarsmen shoreward sped.



The sudden night fell soft and dark  
On lonely sea and shore  
Before back at the fated bark  
Its captain gazed once more.

I know not if the thing he hailed  
From hell or heaven came—  
A livid ship that sailless sailed,  
Lit up by song and flame.

*Far out to sea I flee, I flee—  
Oh, heaven is far away!  
My days are done under the sun—  
Why must I longer stay!*

Row fast; row fast; yet shall he hear  
Naught but that wailing now.  
Yet shall he see, through nights of fear,  
That figure at the prow.

Long years, under this live-oak tree,  
Naught else he saw and heard.  
At last once more he put to sea,  
By a strange passion stirred.

The loud storm roared and flashed that night—  
And never night nor day  
Saw the old pirate's shallop white  
Drift back across the bay.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now we, who wait one night a year  
Under these branches long,  
May see a flaming ship, and hear  
The echo of a song.

## VI. SONNETS AND QUATRAINS



## A POWER-PLANT

*The Fisk Street turbine power station in  
Chicago*

THE invisible wheels go softly round and  
round—

Light is the tread of brazen-footed Power.

Spirits of air, caged in the iron tower,

Sing as they labor with a purring sound.

The abysmal fires, grated and chained and  
bound,

Burn white and still, in swift obedience cower;

While far and wide the myriad lamps, aflower,

Glow like star-gardens and the night confound.

This we have done for thee, almighty Lord;

Yea, even as they who built at thy command

The pillared temple, or in marble made

Thine image, or who sang thy deathless word.

We take the weapons of thy dread right hand,

And wield them in thy service unafraid.

## THE TELEPHONE

YOUR voice, beloved, on the living wire,  
Borne to me by the spirit powerful  
Who binds the atoms and leaps out to pull  
Great suns together! Ah, what magic lyre,  
Strung for God's fingers, sounds to my desire  
The little words immortal, wonderful,  
That all the separating miles annul  
And touch my spirit with your kiss of fire!  
What house of dreams do we inhabit—yea,  
What brave enchanted palace is our home,  
Green-curtained, lit with cresset stars aglow,  
If thus it windows gardens far away,  
Groves inaccessible whence voices come  
That soft in the ear call where we may not go!

## THE TEMPLE OF VISHNU

### *Grand Cañon of Arizona*

VISHNU, the gods of eld are dead. Long dead  
Are Zeus, Astarte, and that lotus-flower,  
Isis of Egypt. Unto each his hour.

Yet thou, silent within thy temple dread,  
Locked against prayers, mounted above the  
tread

Of climbing feet, thou from thy purple tower  
Contemplatest the stern inscrutable power  
Whence all things come and whither all are led.  
The day in splendor of lilac and clear blue  
Visits thy mighty seat. The sapphire night  
Broods in the abyss with darkness, and the rain  
Veils thee with clouds, hails thee and bids adieu  
In thunder. Steadfast on thy terraced height  
Thou seest bold time besiege thy throne in  
vain.

## WINTER

EARTH bears her sorrow gladly, like a nun,  
Her young face glowing through the icy veil.  
The storms that threaten her, the winds that  
rail,

Kindle a deeper color. She has won  
Graces that please the high-enthronèd sun;  
Across her soft white robes that drift and trail  
He casts his lordly purples, lest she quail  
With the dead year, and think that all is done.  
She leadeth on through desolate sad days,  
A smile upon her lips, a triumph-song  
Shut in her heart. Be glad! so singeth she;  
Glad of the solitude, the silent ways,—  
Even of the pain; so shall thy soul grow strong  
For the brave spring that comes to set us free.



## PAIN

SHE heard the children playing in the sun,  
And through her window saw the white-  
stemmed trees

Sway like a film of silver in the breeze  
Under the purple hills; and one by one  
She noted chairs and cabinets, and spun  
The pattern of her bed's pale draperies:  
Yet all the while she knew that each of these  
Was a dull lie, in irony begun.

For down in hell she lay, whose livid fires  
Love may not quench, whose pangs death may  
not quell.

The round immensity of earth and sky  
Shrank to a point that speared her. Loves'  
desires,

Darkened to torturing ministers of hell,  
Whose mockery of joy deepened the lie.

Little eternities the black hours were,  
That no beginning knew, that knew no end.  
Day waned, and night came like a faithless  
friend,  
Bringing no joy; till slowly over her  
A numbness grew, and life became a blur,  
A silence, an oblivion, a dark blend  
Of dim lost agonies, whose downward trend  
Led into time's eternal sepulchre.  
And yet, when, after æons infinite  
Of dark eclipse she woke—lo, it was day!  
The pictures hung upon the walls, each one;  
Under the same rose-patterned coverlet  
She lay; spring was still young, and still the  
play  
Of happy children sounded in the sun.

*ÆRE PERENNIUS*

Look on the dead. Stately and pure he lies  
Under the white sheet's marble folds. For him  
The solemn bier, the scented chamber dim,  
The sacred hush, the bowed heads of the wise,  
The slow pomp, the majestic disguise  
Of haughty death, the conjurer—even for him,  
Poor trivial one, pale shadow on the rim,  
Whom life marked not, but death may not des-  
pise.

Now is he level with the great; no king  
Enthroned and crowned more royal is, more  
sure

Of the world's reverence. Yesterday this thing  
Was but a man, mortal and insecure;  
Now chance and change their homage to him  
bring

And he is one with all things that endure.

## THE PEACEMAKER

To the world-wanderer Samarkand is near,  
The broad Pacific but a narrow strait.  
To him old China at the Asian gate  
A neighbor is, an elder brother dear.  
Toward savage coasts he dares his bark to  
    steer,  
Bidding the tempest bear him on in state.  
He knocks at tombs where kings their sum-  
    mons wait,  
And meets the gods of eld in deserts drear.  
So to the traveller who has long explored  
Tropics of sickness, rocky wastes of pain,  
Or arctic solitudes of icy sorrow—  
To him is death no foe remote, abhorred,  
But a wise friend, a peacemaker who fain  
Would marry loud today with shy tomorrow.

## QUATRAINS

### I

GIVE to brave deeds emblazoned shrines  
Where reverent memories may throng.  
For them Art draws her perfect lines  
In stone, in color, and in song.

### II

*For the Sierra Club Lodge in Yosemite Valley*

Here, traveller, pause along your upward  
way—  
Enter and rest, and search your soul today.  
High are the mountains where your feet would  
fare—  
Let wisdom lead, that joy may find you there.

## III

*The Monument by Saint-Gaudens in Rock  
Creek Cemetery, Washington*

I WAS a woman who now sleep so still.  
I laughed and wept, I loved and had my will.  
Com'st thou to question? com'st thou here to  
    pray?  
Life nor death matters now, nor good nor ill.

## VII. ELEGIES





## FOR A CHILD

*E. H. M.*

*Nov. 17th, 1899—Feb. 13th, 1904*

STILL he lies,  
Pale, wan, and strangely wise.  
Under the white coverlet  
He lies here sleeping yet,  
Though it is day,  
Though through the window flares the gaudy  
day.

With red red roses strewn—  
Little red roses smelling sweet of June—  
He sleeps the winter dawn away.  
The pink and gilded valentines are there  
He fingered yesterday;  
The toy beasts guard him unaware—  
Jumbo the elephant, and Watch the dog,

And Strawberry the big brown furry bear—  
The three he kept with him,  
Who always slept with him,  
Sleep not but stare, like shore lights in a fog.  
All is the same—  
Table and chairs, the picture in its frame,  
The books with covers gay,  
And now, the day!—  
There through the window flares the gaudy day.

Would it were night, since in my heart is  
    night;  
Softly-caressing, blinding, deadening night,  
That won him from me! Would that we—we  
    two,  
Wound close together soft in folds of white,  
Were buried deep in darkness! From the night  
Love called him years ago—from the dim blue  
Of shadow-souls that throng about the earth  
Waiting for birth.  
And when the moons were run,  
Through blackest night, the windy night of  
    pain,  
We rose—we twain—

Into the path of the sun,  
And saw God pass to light the world anew.  
Now all is done,  
The torch is burned away—  
Yet it is day!  
Now through the window flares the gaudy day.

Did you speak, little one?  
At your locked lips I listen evermore.  
Say, do you play upon the starry floor,  
And pluck the anemone and asphodel  
In happy groves, a happy child forever?  
Will you not tell?  
Or in some spirit world, melodious, clear,  
Where life, at truce with death, shall perish  
    never—  
There, in high union with harmonious powers,  
Will your fair soul to perfect stature rear  
And wisdom of a man? And will you be  
God's hero, riding out the sun-long hours  
To bear to captive stars their liberty?  
Or in the heaven of heavens,  
Ringed round with seraphim by threes and  
    sevens,

Wrapt deep in holiness intolerable,  
Will you the glory of God in raptures tell  
Of praise, praise—joy and praise,  
Through the unending days?  
My little one, will you not speak to me—  
To me, who ever heard  
Your softest baby word?  
Will you tell nothing—nothing? Can you be  
Forgetful now and shut your eyes away—  
Now it is day,  
Now through the window flares the gaudy day?

Me ignorant and impotent and blind!  
I look before and after, and unwind  
Intricate webs of thought,  
By saints and sages wrought,  
Only to weave a vapor of the mind  
Here between you and me.  
All weariness, except that on my breast  
Your warm and rosy flesh could softly rest,  
And now my dazed eyes see,  
Tricked out in mockery,  
A heap of ashes marbled with your smile.  
Almost I hear the patter of little feet

Your dancing hours repeat.  
Almost I hear  
Your twitter of laughter at my ear,  
And suddenly feel soft arms around me,  
As though love crowned me.  
Dreams of the night, softly they flit away,  
For it is day—  
Now through the window flares the gaudy day.

Alone—alone—  
Smiling you dare set forth, quick to the call.  
Out of my arms into that far unknown  
Swiftly you run, nor seem to fear at all.  
Don't you know we are one—yes, bone of  
bone,  
Flesh of my flesh, soul of my very soul?  
Whither thou goest I must go, or be  
A coward thing, ever at war with thee,  
Laggard and lost while thou art at the  
goal.  
Ah, leave me not now at the sunrise hour!  
Pause but to take my hand  
And give the high indomitable command,  
And I will mount with thee the topmost tower.

Show me the way,  
Now it is day—  
Now through the window flares the gaudy day.

Ah, dost thou rise before me,  
Braver than I to meet the intrepid morn?  
Dost thou implore me  
To shut thy silent shadow-house forlorn,  
And turn me from its locked and leaden gate  
With heart elate?  
Oh, shall I don my jewelled robe, and so,  
With flourish of flutes and banners all aglow,  
Forth to the triumph go?  
The hills are hung with purple mist  
Beyond thy sepulchre.  
There death and life have newly kissed,  
For thou art early astir.  
There, wedded now who once were twain,  
From truth to truth they rise,  
And thou shalt lead me in their train  
And teach me to be wise.  
Not far, not far  
I follow where thy footsteps are,  
And take from thee

The cup of immortality.  
Here in my little place—  
My little house of time and space—  
Why should I stay—  
Now it is day,  
Now through the window flares the day—the  
day?

In crimson and gold arrayed,  
Royal and unafraid,  
It comes as for the bridal of a queen;  
And far before its feet  
The dawn on pinions fleet  
Spreads wide the path of life, with joy serene.  
Beautiful art thou, beautiful and brave—  
In vain they dig thy grave.  
Thy soul in glory moves, the foremost one  
To scale the sun.  
And now—and now  
I kiss thy tranquil brow,  
And go apace  
Out in the light to find thy dwelling place.  
Now we are bound no more—  
I follow thee beyond the rim of space,

Beyond the farthest shore,  
And never stray,  
For it is day—  
Now through the darkness flares the day—the  
day.



## LULLABY

My little one, sleep softly  
Among the toys and flowers.  
Sleep softly, O my first-born son,  
Through all the long dark hours.  
And if you waken far away  
I shall be wandering too.  
If far away you run and play  
My heart must follow you.

Sleep softly, O my baby,  
And smile down in your sleep.  
Here are red rose-buds for your bed—  
Smile, and I will not weep.  
We made our pledge—you had no fear;  
What then to fear have I?  
Though long you sleep, I shall be near;  
So hush—we must not cry.

Sleep softly, dear one, softly—  
They cannot part us now;  
Forever rest here on my breast,  
My kiss upon your brow.  
What though they hide a little grave  
With dream-flowers false or true?  
What difference? We will just be brave  
Together—I and you.

## TITANIC REQUIEM

SLEEP softly in your ocean bed,  
You who could grandly die!  
Our fathers, who at Shiloh bled,  
Accept your company.

O sons of warriors, lightly rest,  
Daughters of pioneers!  
Heroes freeborn, who chose the best,  
No tears for you, but cheers!

Lovers of life, who life could give,  
Sleep softly where you lie!  
Ours be the vigil—help us live,  
Who teach us how to die.

## THE DEAD AVIATORS

*William R. Badger*

*St. Croix Johnstone*

*Died in Chicago, August 15th, 1911*

GAY gallants! Proud adventurers  
Who dared explore blue deeps of space!  
Young banner-bearers of the race—  
Fresh laurels for their sepulchres!

Soldiers of peace! Up the steep path  
Man follows ever toward the light  
They led the march, they fought the fight,  
Smiling into the face of death.

Bring laurels!—oh, for them not less  
Than heroes of the blood-stained sword,  
Than prophets of the fiery word—  
Pathfinders through the wilderness!

Then onward—past the marble tomb  
Where brave youth lies with shattered wings,  
Past all man's high imaginings,  
His dizzy questionings of doom:

By land and sea and heights of air  
We still must haste, we may not rest.  
Wherever a cause waits, or a quest,  
The wings of dream shall lead us there.

## NOGI

GREAT soldier of the fighting clan,  
Across Port Arthur's frowning face of stone  
You drew the battle sword of old Japan,  
And struck the White Tsar from his Asian  
throne.

Once more the samurai sword  
Struck to the carved hilt in your loyal hand,  
That not alone your heaven-descended lord  
Should meanly wander in the spirit land.

Your own proud way, O eastern star,  
Grandly at last you followed. Out it leads  
To that high heaven where all the heroes are,  
Lovers of death for causes and for creeds.

## SAINT-GAUDENS

BELLS of Cornish  
Toll, toll—  
For the friend who passes  
Through the gate.  
Up the mountain,  
Beyond the goal,  
Into the light  
He goes in state.  
Your vales were his,  
Your homes, your hearts;  
A score of years  
You gave the whole.  
Now flowers from your meadows  
For love, for tears!  
Bells of Cornish,  
Toll, toll.

Bells of the nation,  
Toll, toll—

For the man whose fingers  
Your dreams could mold,  
For his hero hands  
Who your hero soul  
Could carve in marble  
And cast in gold.  
All he gave you—  
Give praise, a song,  
Wreaths for the victor,  
Joy and dole.  
Haste to crown him—  
He served you long.  
Bells of the nation,  
Toll, toll!

Bells of the world,  
Toll, toll—  
For the maker of beauty,  
The seer of truth.  
He looked afar,  
He read the scroll,  
He wrought for your joy,  
He wept for your ruth.  
Now out from your highway



Speed him on,  
With shining fame  
For an aureole.  
Ring him out grandly  
Whose goal is won.  
Bells of the world,  
Toll, toll.



## VIII. OTHER WORLDS



## BEYOND THE SUNS

I SAILED sun-high  
While the world went by.  
The naked dead  
Swept on ahead,  
Turning and wheeling  
And backward reeling,  
Unfit to rise  
To the star-swept skies.  
And beyond the earth,  
In its livid shade,  
They who wait for birth,  
Of the air afraid,  
Nebulous, tremulous,  
Shapeless, dim,  
Cowering unemulous,  
Clung to its rim.  
And the land and ocean  
I could not see,

For the restless motion  
Of souls unfree,  
Whose travail and strife  
In the dust of life  
Pale vapors spun  
To defy the sun.  
Cold rolled the world  
In the clutch of time,  
Like a pregnant woman  
Whose hope sublime  
By pain inhuman  
Is tossed and hurled  
To the door of death,  
Where the ice-blown breath,  
Chill and still,  
Wooes her will,  
Sighs: rest—  
Be blest!

Yet filled, thrilled  
With a mighty light,  
Where sound fell stilled  
And there was no night,  
Pitiless I

Her plight passed by  
And rose alone  
Toward the sun's white throne.  
Pale planets grew,  
Moon-burdened, vast—  
I scarcely knew  
So swift they passed—  
Worlds unkindled  
Or burnt and brown,  
They passed and dwindled  
And darkened down.  
High in the light  
Should I care  
For ghosts in flight  
Everywhere?  
I grew aware  
Of suns that sing  
To one another  
Everything.  
Brother with brother,  
Song with song,  
Trailing their wondering  
Worlds along,  
They filled all the sundering

Spacious ways  
With praise, praise,  
With joy and praise.  
Nearing forever  
The peace above,  
They circled the throne  
Of the Perfect Love;  
Where life, like a river  
That finds the sea,  
Comes to its own  
And at last is free;  
Where souls who the night  
Of dim worlds have trod  
Reach for the light,  
And at last are God.



## ON THE EDGE OF SLEEP

OUT to the world's far end  
They go together—  
Oh, it is whither wend,  
Through the soft weather,  
The souls that two by two  
A light that flees pursue.  
Ah, to the wide world's end  
They go together.

Over them white wings fly,  
The pale earth scorning;  
And music trembles by  
The hush adorning.  
Lo, they run hand in hand,  
Their swift feet burn the land—  
To follow dreams that fly,  
The pale earth scorning.

And will they win at last  
The wings of wonder,  
Whose waft is kingdoms vast,  
Over and under?  
Ever in purple state  
The secret minutes wait.  
And will they win at last  
The wings of wonder?

Out to the world's far end  
They go together,  
Where all remote things blend  
Through the soft weather.  
All may be lost or won  
Under that slanting sun.  
Out to the world's far end  
They go together.

## THROUGH THE WAYS

AGE after age in highest heaven  
His feet the paths of crystal trod—  
A seraph of the circles seven  
Whose white wings veil the face of God.

And there he found a wandering sin.  
“Give it to me,” God whispered low.  
“Why should I give it thee? Within  
My heart it sleeps and none shall know.”

“Give it to me,” God spake. “Nay, nay,  
It is my pearl of price,” he said.  
“It is the beauty of the day—  
Give it, and I were better dead.”

“Give it to me!”—full strange and sweet  
Sounded afar God’s voice, and then  
Was silent. And the seraph’s feet  
Sped down the noisy ways of men.

"God has his heaven and man his world,  
And I—I have but this," he said;  
And stroked the live warm thing that curled  
Close to his heart its drowsy head.

He gave it of his blood to drink,  
He wrapped it in his robe. And so  
On toward the black pit's fearsome brink  
Unfaltering he dared to go.

"Comst thou from heaven?" one called aghast;  
"Oh, hast thou found thy heart's desire?"  
"Comst thou from hell?" another asked,  
"That thus thy two eyes burn like fire?"

He answered not, nor here nor there  
He gazed, smiling a secret smile.  
"From hell or heaven, what do I care  
Since thou art here?" he thought the while.

And the thing grew upon his breast,  
Awoke and opened murderous eyes;  
Till fear the seraph's heart oppressed—  
He saw the very death arise.

Suddenly, swiftly, as a storm  
Sweeps the high stars out row on row,  
A black force struck his quivering form  
And haled him through the vales of woe.

A livid presence huge and cold  
O'ergrew him, freezing heart and brain.  
Shrunk by its stare, his soul grew old—  
Warm in his arms this thing had lain!

Down the steep winds in darkness driven,  
Sped by the dim throng's ribald cries,  
He saw afar white hosts of heaven  
With crossed wings veiling troubled eyes.

And, though in thick mire overblown  
Under the monster's mass he lay,  
He cried: "The Lord is on his throne—  
I will arise and find the way."

Then a great light searched the abyss,  
And God himself shone through the drear.  
"Thinkst thou I always bide in bliss?"—  
It was God's voice—"Lo, I am here."



IX. OUT OF DOORS





## MOTHER EARTH

OH a grand old time has the earth  
In the long long life she lives!  
From her huge mist-shrouded birth,  
When reeling from under  
She tore space asunder,  
And feeling her way  
Through the dim first day  
Rose wheeling to run  
In the path of the sun—  
From then till forever,  
Tiring not, pausing never,  
She labors and laughs and gives.

Plains and mountains  
She slowly makes,  
With mighty hand  
Sifting the sand,  
Lifting the land

Out of the soft wet clutch of the shouting sea.  
At lofty fountains  
Her thirst she slakes,  
And over the hills  
Through the dancing rills  
Wide rivers she fills,  
That shine and sing and leap in their joy to be  
free.

Cool greenness she needs  
And rich odor of bloom;  
And longing, believing,  
Slowly conceiving,  
Her germ-woof weaving,  
She spawns little seeds  
By the wombful, the worldful,  
And laughs as the pattern grows fair at her  
loom.

Proudly she trails  
Her flower-broidered dresses  
In the sight of the sun.  
Loudly she hails  
Through her far-streaming tresses  
His coursers that run.

For her heart, ever living, grows eager for  
    life,  
Its delight and desire;  
She feels the high praise of its passion and  
    strife,  
Of its rapture and fire.  
There are wings and songs in her trees,  
There are gleaming fish in her seas;  
The brute beasts brave her  
And gnaw her and crave her;  
And out of the heart of these  
She wrests a dream, a hope,  
An arrogant plan  
Of life that shall meet her,  
Shall know and complete her,  
That through ages shall climb and grope,  
And at last be man.

Out of the bitter void she wins him—  
Out of the night;  
With terror and wild hope begins him,  
And fierce delight.  
She beats him into caves,  
She starves and spurns him.

Her hills and plains are graves—  
Into dust she turns him.  
She teaches him war and wrath  
And waste and lust and greed,  
Then over his blood-red path  
She scatters her fruitful seed.  
With bloom of a thousand flowers,  
With songs of the summer hours,  
With the love of the wind for the tree,  
With the dance of the sun on the sea,  
She lulls and quells him—  
Oh soft her caress!—  
And tenderly tells him  
Of happiness.  
Through her ages of years,  
Through his toil and his tears,  
At her wayward pleasure  
She yields of her treasure  
A gleam—yea, a hope,  
Even a day of days,  
When the wide heavens ope  
And he loves and prays;  
Then she laughs in wonder  
To see him rise

Her leash from under  
And brave the skies!

Oh a grand old time has the earth  
In the long long life she lives!  
A grand old time at her work sublime  
As she labors and laughs and gives!

## NOW

### *Yosemite Valley*

It is creation's morning—  
Freshly the rivers run;  
The cliffs, white brows adorning,  
Sing to the shining sun.

The forest, plumed and crested,  
Scales the steep granite wall.  
The ranged peaks, glacier-breasted,  
March to the festival.

The mountains dance together,  
Lifting their domed heads high.  
The cataract's foamy feather  
Flaunts in the streaming sky.

Somewhere a babe is borning,  
Somewhere a maid is won.  
It is creation's morning—  
Now is the world begun.

## THE HETCH-HETCHY\*

HAVE you found the happy valley?

No? then follow—I have seen  
Where it lies.

Shoon and staff—oh, leave your alley!

Pass the foot-hills, pass the green  
Gates that rise.

Soft it slumbers, locked in granite,

Cliffs like silver-mailed knights -  
Ranged around.

And the mountain breezes fan it,

Snow-plumed winds from hoary heights  
Glacier-crowned.

\* By authority of Congress, the Hetch-Hetchy Valley, in the Yosemite National Park, is condemned to be flooded to supply water and power to the city of San Francisco.

There slim waterfalls dash madly,  
Breaking, foaming, thundering  
As they pass  
Into blue-eyed brooks that gladly  
Trail their gauzy gowns and ring  
Bells of glass.

There the Rancheria, laughing,  
Down her cleft of granite trips  
Like a girl;  
Leaps to meet her lover, quaffing  
Cataracts through foamy lips  
As they whirl.

And Tuolumne the river  
From his plunges mountain-deep  
Rests awhile;  
Winds with many a curve and quiver  
Down in flowery glades asleep  
Mile on mile.

Come—'neath plummy cedars lying  
We shall hear his crystal tune  
Filmy soft;



Watch his foamy fringes flying  
Till the mountain-climbing moon  
Rides aloft.

Then the stars will guard our slumbers—  
Never head in royal bed  
Lay so still—  
While the stream sings lulling numbers,  
And the ghostly shadows tread  
Where they will.

Oh the golden days that shimmer  
In that deep entrancèd vale  
Richly bright!  
Oh the twilights dim and dimmer,  
Till from granite shoulders pale  
Falls the night!

Come, friend, pass the frowning portals!  
Take the Magic Valley—stay—  
It's your quest.  
Come, forget that we are mortals—  
Where the gods have had their way  
Men are blest.

## THE RIVER KERN

WHILE I walk the pavement sooty  
    In the town,  
Tread the stony path of duty  
    Up and down,  
Oh, the Kern, all clad in beauty—  
    Silver sheen  
    On blue and green—  
Down his cañon goes cascading,  
    Cavalcading,  
    Cannonading,  
Seizing all the brooks and fountains—  
    How they beat  
    Their crystal feet!—  
Shouting to the haughty mountains,  
    Giant peaks that frown!

Oh, my heart runs with the river  
    Far away,

Though through wintry streets I shiver  
Day by day!  
Oh, I see the sunshine quiver—  
Shafts of light  
That pause in flight!—  
While the Kern, with white feet prancing,  
Downward dancing,  
Gaily glancing,  
Shakes the massive earth from under—  
How he snocks  
The solemn rocks!—  
Shoves the mighty cliffs asunder,  
Bids them guard his play!

Now I hear the horns a-blowing  
From the height,  
And I see white garments flowing  
Sheer and bright!  
Down the hills the Kern is going—  
Hear him call  
His legions all!  
Ye intrepid, oh come leaping!  
Leave your sleeping  
And your weeping!

Swords from scabbards—hark, the clamor!  
Swift and free  
Oh would you be?—  
In the glory, in the glamour,  
Follow day and night!

## THE SAGE

SEQUOIA, growing grandly  
Out of the long ago,  
Beloved of Time, whose æons  
March by to measures slow,  
How tenderly you cherish  
All little lives below!

Your mighty column pillars  
The blue dome of the sky.  
Your foliage plumes with greenness  
The clouds that pass on high.  
Yet here below slim lilies grow,  
And here at peace am I.

How have you won Time over—  
That lord of dark renown?  
His hand, that withers all things,  
Has given your brow a crown.

From your crest forty centuries  
Now upon me look down.

Yes, all the lordly ages  
Your youth immortal knows,  
Yet softly here you fashion  
A carpet for the rose,  
And smoothly spread a mossy bed  
Under my deep repose.

You have defied the lightnings—  
They rent and scarred in vain.  
Fierce fires have stripped you naked—  
You made your peace with pain,  
And bloomed again in beauty  
To baffle death's disdain.

Where do you win your secret  
Of life untroubled, free,  
And wise with all the wisdom  
Of time's democracy?  
What do you hear this many a year?—  
Whisper the song to me!

## SIERRAN SONG

### *To the California Sierra Club*

COME climb the mountain trails with me,  
Where pine-trees plume the sky,  
Where snowy peaks salute the sea  
When herald winds pass by.  
Wah ho! the day is blue,  
The night with stars aglow;  
And all the dreams come true  
Up there—wah ho!

The stream runs dancing on its way,  
The meadows flush with flowers.  
The gay birds sing a roundelay  
Through all the crystal hours.  
Wah ho! the sky is blue,  
The world is soft as snow;  
And all the dreams come true  
Up there—wah ho!

Come hit the trail—the cliff-bound vale  
Our stately house shall be.  
Our feet shall tread beyond the pale  
Of dull mortality.

Wah ho! the world is new,  
And heaven is all aglow!  
And every dream comes true  
Up there—wah ho!



## AT THE SUMMIT

WHERE bold Sierras cut the sky  
Mount Whitney, of the high most high,  
Halts the pale clouds that wander by.

We crept and climbed with eager feet,  
Until the world, fulfilled, complete,  
Plunged like despair before his seat.

So high the peak was we had won  
Earth's air wore thin, its woof undone,  
And blue space darkened round the sun.

Yet, as we trembled there and quailed,  
Lo, higher yet an eagle scaled  
Smooth steeps of air, and sunward sailed.

## THE GIANT CACTUS OF ARIZONA

THE cactus in the desert stands  
Like time's inviolate sentinel,  
Watching the sun-washed waste of sands  
Lest they their ancient secrets tell.  
And the lost lore of mournful lands  
It knows alone and guards too well.

Wiser than Sphynx or pyramid,  
It points a stark hand at the sky,  
And all the stars alight or hid  
It counts as they go rolling by;  
And mysteries the gods forbid  
Darken its heavy memory.

I asked how old the world was—yea,  
And why yon ruddy mountain grew  
Out of hell's fire. By night nor day  
It answered not, though all it knew,

But lifted, as it stopped my way,  
Its wrinkled fingers toward the blue.

Inscrutable and stern and still  
It waits the everlasting doom.  
Races and years may do their will—  
Lo, it will rise above their tomb,  
Till the drugged earth has drunk her fill  
Of light, and falls asleep in gloom.

## AT THE GRAND CAÑON

WIND of the desert, softly blow  
Across the cañon shining wide.  
Lightly among the temples go  
That rise in towers of pride.  
Soft, lest they float away  
Out in the azure day!

## LAKE LOUISE

BLUER than Helen's eyes she lies  
Under the blue cloud-drifting skies;  
A daughter fair of light and air  
Dropped among warrior mountains there.

White glaciers kiss her feet so fleet—  
Oh fugitive, too rare and sweet!  
Will she not fling them off that cling,  
And rise, a bluebird on the wing?

Will she not rise and stray away,  
A blue gleam on the brow of day?  
Look—still she stays, and bright, snow-white,  
The glaciers guard her day and night!

## MARCH

I SEE the snow-drops flutter  
    Their white wings in the gale.  
I hear the robin utter  
    On high his gallant tale.

Look where the rash wind chases  
    With clouds the climbing sun!  
The day makes merry faces—  
    Gaily her gray steeds run.

The bare brown trees are swinging,  
    The curled waves roll and rail.  
Ho!—madcap Spring comes singing  
    On frosty Winter's trail!

## AT THE SHIP'S RAIL

THE blue sea bends to the ship  
Like a dancer with skirts of lace—  
Wide diaphanous laces that curl and dip  
In the ardent wind's embrace.

Little rainbows dash at the play  
And die of joy in the sun;  
While over and under, the long bright day,  
The sparkling footsteps run.

Lovely, melodious  
Is the sound of the dance on the sea.  
Softly the white robes trail and toss  
Over blue waves that flee.

## WINGS

PEARL-GRAY is the sky,  
And high within it, sailing by,  
Three sea-gulls fly.

Pearl-white are they  
Against the sky's obscurer gray—  
Sea-foam astray.

Gulls, sea-gulls white,  
Drift of the day, drift of the night,  
Mine be your flight!

Out—out, with you  
Beyond the noise, into the blue!  
Ah—if I knew!



## THE HUMMING-BIRD

WHAT a boom! boom!

Sounds among the honeysuckles!  
Saying, "Room! room!

Hold your breath and mind your knuckles!"  
And a fairy birdling bright  
Flits like a living dart of light,  
With his tiny whirlwind wings  
Flies and rests and sings.

All his soul one flash, one quiver,

Down each cup  
He thrusts his long beak with a shiver,  
Drinks the sweetness up;  
Takes the best of earth and goes—

Daring sprite!—  
Back to his heaven no mortal knows,  
A heaven as sweet as the heart of a rose  
Shut at night.

## IN THE AIR

OUT upon the trackless highway  
Now I go,  
Beaten road and trail and byway  
Far below!

I have shaken from my feet  
Mire of earth, dust of the street.  
Now the birds' way shall be my way,  
Winds of heaven shall be my seat!  
Out upon the untrodden highway  
Now I go.

Patterned parks and bold skyscrapers  
Of the town,  
Close-packed houses plumed with vapors,  
Dwindle down  
In a world that slants and tips.  
And the little creeping ships  
Skim the sea. And people crawling

In their cage earth-bound, appalling,  
Crowd and cross and would be free—  
Look at me!

I shall over-ride the mountain  
Through the blue,  
And the cloud shall be my fountain  
Fringed with dew.  
Towers and tree-tops swing and sway,  
Brodered meadows glide away.  
Now I tread the air's own highway,  
Now the eagle's way is my way.  
I am off to meet the mountain—  
Where are you?

## THE NIGHT-BLOOMING CEREUS

Flower of the moon!

Still white is her brow whom we worshipped on  
earth long ago,

Yes, purer than pearls in deep seas and more  
virgin than snow.

The dull years veil their eyes from her shining  
and vanish afraid,

Nor profane her with age—the immortal, nor  
dim her with shade.

It is we are unworthy, we worldlings, to dwell  
in her ways.

We have broken her altars and silenced her  
voices of praise.

She has harkened to singing more silvern, seen  
raptures more bright;

To a planet more pure she has fled on the  
wings of the night—

Flower of the moon.

Yet she loves the proud world that forsook her,  
for lo, once a year  
She, Diana, translucent, pale, scintillant, down  
from her sphere  
Floats to earth soft as star-laden music to  
bloom in a flower;  
And our hearts feel the spell of the goddess  
once more, for an hour.

See! enthroned in her splendor she knows not  
desire nor decay;  
And the night is a glory around her more bright  
than the day.  
And her breath has the sweetness of worlds  
where no sorrow is known,  
And we long as we worship to follow her back  
to her own—  
Flower of the moon!



## X. DANCE OF THE SEASONS

I—Spring. *Allegro*

II—Summer. *Andante*

III—Autumn. *Scherzo*

IV—Winter. *Finale*

The dance symphony to which this poem belongs was first given in Fullerton Hall, Art Institute of Chicago, January 15th, 1907, the author reading the four parts of the poem as preludes to the four movements of a costume dance by Mrs. Moore.

*To Kathleen McDonald Hamill*





## DANCE OF THE SEASONS

### I—SPRING

*Allegro*

WAKE! wake!

Out of the snow and the mist,  
In rain-wet wind-blown gauze  
Of amber and amethyst,  
Cometh Spring like a girl.  
Trembling and timorous  
She peers through the thin white thaws,  
Afraid of the winds that whirl  
Down paths all perilous  
Where her so tender feet are softly going,  
Where the rich earth is awaiting her lavish  
    sowing  
Of green and purple and white  
In the gardens of day and night.

Hither she comes—  
Oh lightly she wavers and lingers!

The chill gray storm benumbs  
Her lifted rose-petal fingers,  
And looses her hair from its fillet of pearl.  
Her soft, dew-fringed eyes—  
The virginal eyes of a girl—  
Gaze at the foam-veiled skies,  
Search for the sun who is hiding  
His amorous glowing face,  
For the spirit of life now gliding  
Unseen through every place.

Blown! blown—  
Hither and yon,  
Dashed by the winds that groan,  
Lashed by the frost-elves wan,  
Whipped by the envious ghosts of old years  
    long gone,  
That chatter and sigh  
Of the ruin nigh,  
Of death and darkness and sorrow that come  
    anon.  
Yet bold and brave  
She dares—the young Spring—to dance on  
    that ancient grave,

To dance with delicate feet  
On the world's despair and defeat,  
On the Winter's ashen pall  
That covers all.

Look! she lifts the cover—  
A corner of that frost-film pall she lifts.  
Now Earth, great-hearted lover,  
Smiles upward through the dew-bespangled  
    rifts.  
And shining sunbeams, pages of the day,  
Roll up the mantle, bear it far away.  
Then the Earth laughs with pleasure,  
And tosses from her treasure  
Store of blue crocuses and snow-drops white,  
Glad trilliums that make the woodland  
    bright,  
Rich arbutus and shadowy violets:  
Till, caught in webs of bloom,  
Light-footed Spring her stormy woe forgets,  
Forgets the cold, the gloom,  
Blesses with errant grace  
Each dim forgotten place,  
Casts on the oak a rosy velvet dress

Of drooping leaves, muffles the maples bare  
In lilac veils, covers with tenderness  
The harsh brown world; and then, when all  
    is won,  
Trails languorous dreams, dreams exquisite  
    and rare,  
And shrinking from the bold, too-fervid sun,  
Shyly gives over  
Her royal lover,  
Like one afraid of love, who will not stay  
Love's perfect day;  
Lightly gives over—  
Inconstant rover—  
Her glad fresh-garlanded world, and like the  
    dew  
Sleeps in the blue.  
She tosses down  
Her flowery crown  
Into the lap of Summer—  
Glad newcomer!—  
Smiling adorns her with treasure of growing  
    things,  
And softly sings,  
Even while she fades in light—

A wraith, a mist  
Of amethyst;  
A spirit, a dream that goes,  
But whither—who knows?

## II—SUMMER

*Andante*

Hush! hush!  
Wake not the drowsy Summer—she would  
dream,  
Heavy with growing things.  
Dance lightly where her beauty lies a gleam  
Under languidly folded wings.  
Over the delicate grasses  
A breath, a spirit passes,  
A song, and the odor of bloom—  
Give way! make room!  
The Summer has met her lover  
By day, by night;  
He has brought from the stars—bright  
rover—  
Heaven's fire, heaven's light!  
He has filled her with life that sleepeth,

That waits for birth,  
As a jewel its bright fire keepeth  
In the rock-bound earth.

Softly, slowly  
Dance and sway,  
While Summer dreameth  
The moons away.  
Full weary she seemeth  
Of love's deep bliss,  
But holy, holy  
Love's memories.

The idle day is rich with budding things  
Whereon the bold sun glares.  
Dance lightly, lest you tread on folded wings,  
Of flight still unawares.  
Ah, delicate your footfall be, while ever  
The seed grows in the corn,  
The bird in the egg, the deed in the endeavor,  
The day in the morn.  
Deep in the pool the spawning fishes play;  
High in the air the bees buzz out their way.  
Everywhere

The children of Summer come crowding in  
lustrous array—  
The myriad children of Summer, beloved of  
the sun,  
Through the long hot noons they are glad of  
the world they have won.  
Bright and fair  
They throng in the meadows and shake out  
the dew from their hair;  
They sing in the tree-tops, they dip in the  
slow-flowing stream;  
They nod from the hills, in the valleys their  
swift feet gleam;  
They kneel in the moonlight, the bright stars  
hear their prayer.  
Everywhere  
The high sun blesses them,  
The moon confesses them,  
Old Time with patient smile  
Harks to their hope awhile.  
They are born, they awake, they arise—now  
they dance in their bloom;  
For their revels of love and of wonder the  
earth makes room.

Oh, she harks to their song for a season, she  
    kisses their feet;  
She gives them her all for their hour—be its  
    joy complete!

The fecund Summer then  
Covers her eyes again—  
Lies dreaming, at rest:  
Young mother of life who is feeding  
The world at her breast;  
Rich bride of the year, ever needing  
But love and light  
To give, and give more, and give all  
In her great love's might.  
Tread softly, give heed to her call—  
Oh be still! be fleet!  
Hush—hush the sweet sound of your sing-  
    ing;  
Pause—pause, ye feet!  
Sink down! she bids you rest  
Close on her breast.  
Down! down! your rapture flinging  
Where all her dreams are winging.  
Ah, cease your quest!



Peace!—be blest!  
Be blest!

## III—AUTUMN

*Scherzo*

Come with me—  
All that live!  
Dance with me—  
Love—and give!  
Give me your love, ye souls of the corn and  
the vine!  
Dance with me! laugh with me! crowd me!  
be mine—be mine!  
Up from the earth in your splendor of scarlet  
and gold—  
Haste, oh make haste ere the warm rich year  
grow old!  
Ye throngs that gaily rise  
Multitudinous  
As the red red leaves that flutter  
All tremulous  
When the wind rides down from the skies;  
Ye spirits that shout and mutter

In laughter, in pain,  
When the year of her sowing and reaping  
Would waste again,  
Come spend of your treasure, full heaping,  
Be lavish, be bold!  
Cast your hope on the winds, from your feet  
shake the dark damp mould;  
Come dancing, come shouting, come leaping,  
Ere the earth grow cold!

Come, wings of the air; come, feet that  
trample the grasses!  
Come, tree-top spirits that kindle the leaves  
to flame!  
Come, sprites of the sea that shout when the  
gray storm passes!  
Come, wraiths of the desert whom sorrow  
nor death may tame!  
Come eat of the rich ripe fruit, come drink  
of the vine!  
Come dance till your revels are drunken with  
joy, with wine.  
For the labor is over and done,  
The spoil of the battle is won!

Ah trample it, scatter it,  
Cast it afar!  
The tempests will batter it—  
On with the war!  
Let your bright robes float, let them whirl  
    with the rush of your feet—  
The gauzes of crimson and gold!  
Give your will to the winds—they are chas-  
    ing, they haste, they are fleet,  
They are eager and ruthless and bold.  
On! on! till you circle the earth with the rush  
    of your dancing,  
With the shout and the song;  
Till your choral of crowds, like a river in  
    flood-time advancing,  
Bears all things along!  
Dance! dance! for the end comes soon—  
Do you feel the chill?  
White winds of the Winter croon  
From their cave in the hill.  
Yes, death and the end come soon—  
Spread your gaudy robes!  
Haste! haste! for the leaves are falling.  
Shout! shout! for the storms are calling.

Give all, for the year grows old,  
And the world grows cold.

## IV—WINTER

*Finale*

Fly! fly!  
Gather your white robes close—  
Scuttle away!  
Look! in the sky  
The bleak winds mutter morose  
To the swift dark day.  
They gather and threaten and scold,  
They shiver and shriek in their rage.  
They are ashen and icy and old—  
Ah, bitter the passion of age!  
Flee from them! haste—haste  
Through the vengeful weather!  
Lest your red blood chill  
And your hearts stop still,  
Crowd close together  
And flee o'er the drear dead waste!

Down! down!  
Out of a sky all brown

The dark storm stoops to shrivel the world  
away.

With ribald wind he strips her,  
With stinging sleet he whips her,  
With envious frost he withers her green to  
gray.

Because she was gay and glad,  
Beloved of many lovers, fruitful mother  
Of many children crowding and killing each  
other;

Because she was wasteful mad,  
Scattering and trampling her riches for death  
to smother,

Now shall she starve and freeze  
And pray on her stiffened knees.  
Now shall she helpless lie  
And the powers of the air will mock her;  
The spirits she dared defy  
Will rend her and blind her and shock her.  
With white white snow they will bury her  
passion deep

Till it's dumb, till it's cold.

They will whistle and roar in their triumph  
and orgies keep

Till her heart grows old.  
They will put out her love-lit sun like the  
    torch at a feast,  
And with haughty carousals make wanton his  
    court in the east.  
They will brush down the stars like white  
    feathers far blown on dark waves,  
And the night will be black as they dance on  
    the ghost-thronged graves.

Haste! haste!  
Your garments are torn, they are sheeted  
    with ice,  
In your wind-loosed hair  
The sharp sleet rattles.  
You are hurled, chased  
To the Winter's lair—  
You have paid the price,  
You have bled in her battles.  
Now shelter your woe  
And be still, be still!  
Let the night-winds go  
To their cave in the hill!  
Let the dark clouds flee

Through the gates of the west,  
Till the earth rides free  
Who was sore oppressed.  
For weary of orgies that ravage  
Is Winter now.  
From the heel of a tyrant savage  
She lifts her brow.  
See—the wrath of the storm is over,  
And under a moon-white cover  
Lies the world asleep.  
So still, so pale—  
Dance bravely, lest you quail  
And pause to weep.  
Over the flower-soft snow  
Still as the lost wind go  
To open the gates of day.  
Where watches yon lone pale star  
Crimson and golden are  
The curtains that shake and sway.  
Ah, lift them! look, through the rift  
Comes the sun adrift!  
He kindles the snow to fire,  
He bids the dead earth aspire.  
Oh dance! from the year's white grave

New blooms will blow.  
Dance lightly, wistfully! save  
The life below!  
Softly! the world is still—  
Hush your errant will!  
No longer the dream pursue!  
Rest—rest, till the dream come true!  
Wait! hope! be still!

THE END



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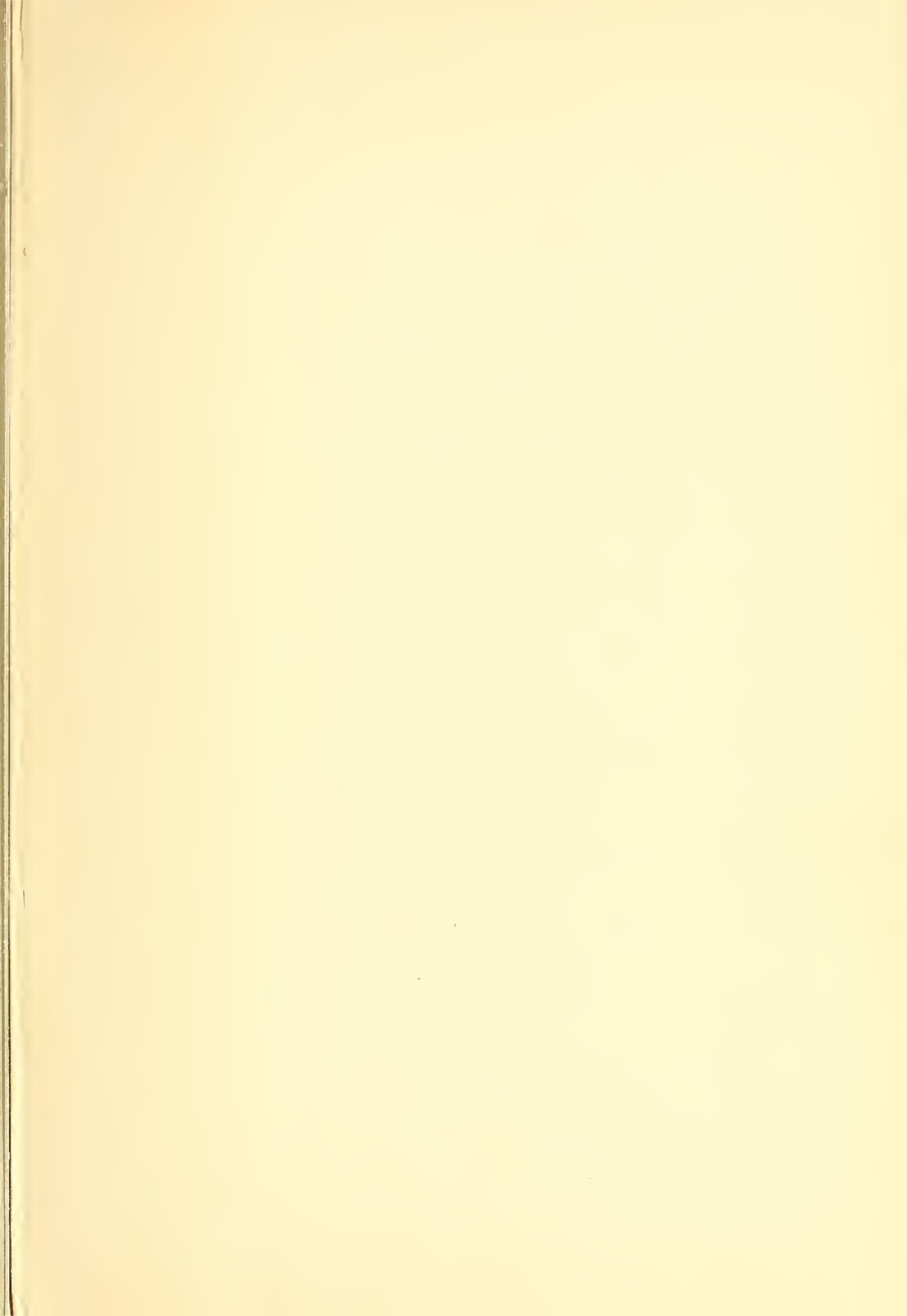




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